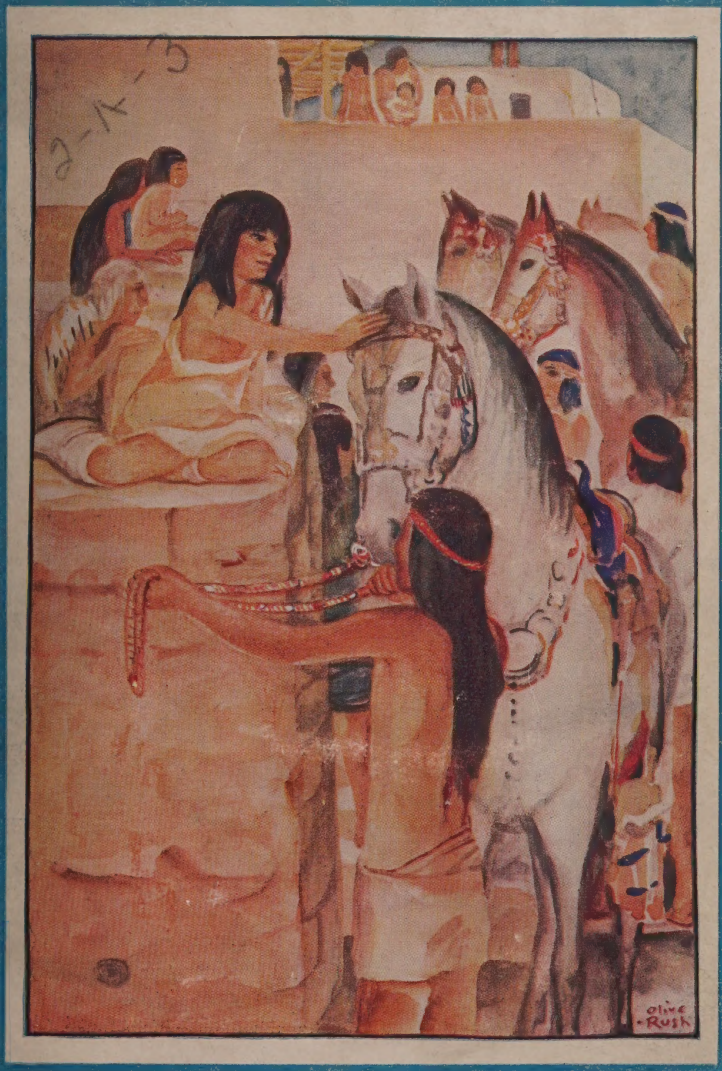
THE PUEBLO GIRL



CORNELIA JAMES CANNON

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THE PUEBLO GIRL

By Cornelia James Cannon

LIKE 'The Pueblo Boy,' this new story by Mrs. Cannon has for its background the coming of Coronado and his Spanish Conquistadores to the Rio Grande in 1540, when the bold adventurer came up from New Spain, penetrated the Pueblo country of New Mexico, and invaded the buffalo country as far as what is now the State of Kansas.

It deals with the later adventures of the Conquistadore in the settlements of the Rio Grande and on the great plains and his final return to New Spain. The narrative follows the actual experiences of the Spaniards. But Mrs. Cannon has succeeded in setting against her background a picturesque and exciting story that makes fascinating reading.

Illustrated by Olive Rush

The Pueblo Girl

ornelia J. Cannon

Colorado River
Navajo
Tusayan
Apaches
Coronado's Route
The Path of
Coronado
1540 1541

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WAPOH AND THE FIRST HORSES TO COME TO SIA (*page* 51)

The Pueblo Girl

The Story of Coronado on the Rio Grande

By
CORNELIA JAMES CANNON
Author of 'The Pueblo Boy'

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
OLIVE RUSH

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TO
MY CHILDREN
MY MOST SEVERE AND HELPFUL
CRITICS

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The Pueblo Girl

CHAPTER I

THE NEW ENEMY

One bright sunny day in December, 1540, nearly a hundred years before the Pilgrims landed on the rock at Plymouth, there was great excitement in the pueblo of Sia on the muddy Jemez River. Wapoh, a little black-haired, nine-year-old Indian girl with skin of a warm brown color like the bark of the yellow pines that grew on the mountains of her country, was as frightened as any one else. For untold time, as far back as the memory of the pueblo people went, nothing like this had ever happened. The wise men of the pueblo, to whom the others looked for guidance, knew not what to advise.

The Pueblo Girl

In the pueblo land, with its wide desert stretches and flat-topped mesas, which centuries later was to be known as New Mexico, a new enemy had appeared.

Sia had always had enemies. There had never been a time when she was free of them. The cruel Apaches in the south and the wandering Navajos in the north kept the pueblo people in dread of treacherous attack, both summer and winter. For protection they had built terraced houses with thick walls of adobe and stone. The first floor had no outside openings for fear a sly foe might steal in unawares. But through holes in the flat roof, food could be lowered into the dark interior and stored in safety from thieving Indians. The upper levels of the pueblos were reached by climbing from floor to floor on notched poles. When these ladders were pulled up at night, the pueblo people could sleep in peace, secure from their ancient enemies.

Sia was three stories high, each story set back like a step, with the flat roof in front serving as a street along the whole length of the pueblo. In a room on the top level, entered from the roof of the second story by a low narrow door, Wapoh lived with her grandmother. When she went to bed, lying wrapped in skins on the floor of the

little room, she felt perfectly safe. She looked at the brilliant star-sprinkled sky or at the moon moving mysteriously overhead, not needing to listen for strange sounds or to dread an unfamiliar step on the roof. She knew no raiding Indian could reach her shelter and carry her off to share a wild roving life.

What made this new enemy so terrifying was that though he was a man he was not like any man that had ever been seen, and his followers were as strange as himself. During the long winter evenings, when the pueblo children huddled for warmth round the fire in their homes, they had heard tales of how the world began and how it reached from sunrise to sunset. They had learned that all its inhabitants were dark-skinned people like themselves.

But now from a far country, under the leadership of a captain named Coronado, had come white-skinned men who called themselves Spaniards. They wore shining clothes which turned back the light of the sun, and they carried strange weapons which killed while far away. They had crossed mighty waters to a country south of Sia, where long-tailed green parrots roosted in the trees and the lizards were large and many-colored. From there they had come north over mountains and across hot deserts to the land of

the pueblos, bringing terror to the people whose fabled wealth they sought.

Neither Wapoh nor any of the Sia Indians had ever heard of such beings before. Were they evil spirits sent to destroy the Indian? Would the pueblo magicians be able to weaken the white men's magic and send them away to come no more?

Wapoh was sitting curled up in a blanket on the flat roof of the storeroom, where in the fall the corn was spread out to dry and the squashes to turn golden in the sunlight. The girl's black hair was cut short in front, but hung long in back. She wore a short skirt of woven material and a square of the same cloth fastened on her right shoulder, leaving her left shoulder bare. On her feet were soft buckskin boots that reached almost to her knees. Her eyes were black and shining, but her cheeks were thin like those of a child that will not eat.

She was thinking of the news that had been coming in day by day as runners from the neighboring pueblos brought tidings of the approach of the strange enemy. She knew that when the Spaniards had reached the pueblo country, they had gone first to Cibola, the seven pueblos in the valley where Thunder Mountain raised its steep sides. After staying there a time, some of them

had started toward the rising sun. In passing they had stopped to see Acoma, the pueblo on its great mesa like a giant table of rock, where lived people who spoke the same language as those of Sia. Early in September a few had reached the great river into which the Jemez emptied, the river which was some day to bear the name Rio Grande, given it by the Spaniards.

Now word had come that the rest of the army of white men was drawing near and would soon join its leaders. There to the south, hidden from her eyes by the hills, Wapoh knew that Tiguex and the other pueblos scattered along the river waited with dread the approach of the great body of the invaders. She trembled for those who lived in the path of the stranger.

She did not fear for her own people. They would know how to drive away the enemy. Even now the medicine men were fasting in the underground kiva, the sacred room of the pueblo, in preparation for receiving wisdom from the underworld as to how to make Sia safe. The spirits which had always protected the storied house by the river would not desert it now!

She could see a tiny thread of smoke coming out of the opening in the circular roof of the kiva.

The wise men and the warriors must be taking counsel there together. She drew her blanket close about her and put away the thought of fear.

CHAPTER II

THE MAGIC STEEDS

Two boys were playing kick-stick on the level space below the roof where Wapoh was sitting. Their hair was black like hers and their skin had the same glowing brown color. The straight locks that fell to their shoulders were held back from their faces by cotton bandas which were tied around their heads. Though the day was cold neither wore anything except moccasins and a breech-cloth.

The snow, which had been unusually heavy, covered the mesa above the pueblo with a blanket of dazzling white, but on the hard-packed clay around the houses it had quickly melted and left the ground bare. The boys were racing, each kicking a rudely carved stick ahead of him as he ran. Back and forth on the open ground in front of the pueblo, they matched their speed. Wapoh watched them, wishing that she might join in their sport, but she knew that only when very young were pueblo boys and girls allowed to play together.

After a time the two boys stopped to rest. Wapoh above them could hear what they were

saying. They were talking of the menace in Tiguex. The few white men who had come in September, to find a place for the army which was to follow, had ridden on four-footed animals which they called horses. Never had the pueblo people seen such creatures. They snorted and pranced, pawed the earth, and spoke strange speech to each other. They seemed always to do their riders' will, and were able to travel long distances without tiring.

At first the Indians had believed that the horses ate human flesh and breathed fire from their nostrils. But some warriors from Sia who had been to Tiguex found that many of the stories they had heard were untrue. The animals lived, not on flesh, but on grass, and their breath was no warmer than a man's. One or two of the bravest Tiguex Indians had even ventured to ride on the backs of the terrifying creatures, and had come to no harm.

'Some day when I'm a man,' said one of the boys, 'I'll steal a horse and ride away from the white man with it.'

The other boy looked at him with admiration. It was a brave boast for a pueblo child who knew what strange forms witches sometimes take in order to injure men. Who could be sure these four-footed creatures were not evil enchanters?

But he remembered that Kotka was named for the brown bear whose claws are magic against bad spirits. Such a boy could not be afraid.

'My father was at Tiguex when the first white men came,' went on Kotka. 'Their leader told the pueblo people that they must give food and shelter for the winter to his men and to the army which was following after him.'

The boys knew what that meant to the Tiguex people. They thought of the storerooms of their own pueblo with little more corn and beans and squashes than they needed until the next harvest was ready. The kivas were full every night of the men and boys who lived there. They knew that in the rooms on the upper floors of the terraced house the women and girls found barely space to lie, while the babies slept in cradles hung from the beams of the roof. Sia had no place where the white men could be welcomed. Tiguex must be as crowded.

The pueblo people built new rooms only when they needed them and those they did not use were neglected. The rains quickly softened the adobe mud of which they were made and before long they fell apart. What had once been homes of men sank into heaps of pale brown clay.

'Late last night in the kiva,' said Kotka's young companion, 'they thought I was sleeping,

but I heard. In the darkness a runner came from Tiguex, full of fear. He told the chief that the white captain had that morning driven the Tiguex people from their pueblo. The army of Coronado was drawing near and they must have it for themselves. He would not let the pueblo men take away food or clothes. When the chief of Tiguex said the days and nights were cold and his people would freeze, the captain would not listen. They had to leave their blankets and their rabbit-skin cloaks for the white man to wear and their dried meat and their corn for him to eat.'

'Where did the Tiguex people go?' asked Kotka.

'To the pueblos to the north,' answered the boy. 'This winter all the pueblos will be cold. None will have enough to eat. The skin will be drawn tight across the ribs of those who live on the big river until the corn ripens in the summer.'

Kotka's eyes were big with wonder.

'My father says the white men are as fierce as the Apaches,' he said. 'They go like the wind on their four-footed beasts and they have magic weapons that puff out their breath and kill from a great distance.'

The boys went back to their game. But after

that they played more quietly, as though sobered by the thought of the misery and unhappiness that the new foe on his enchanted steed was bringing to the pueblo people.

CHAPTER III

THE COMING OF TYAMI

Wapoh was a brave little girl, but she had more reason than most of the children of Sia to fear the pueblo's enemies. She had a special terror of the roving Indians, for her own father had fallen victim to their cruelty. The Navajos and Apaches had a habit of creeping along the valley or dashing down from the mesas, unheard and unseen. Before their presence was even suspected, they would kill and steal and disappear again as though mysteriously invisible to the eyes of their victims.

Wapoh's father had the task of repairing the irrigation ditches which carried the water from the river to the planted fields. One spring day he was at work some distance from the pueblo and was not ready to start back until dusk had fallen. As he walked along the ditch, his eyes on its grassy margin, armed only with the flat wooden spade he used for heaping up the dirt, he was pierced by the arrow of a Navajo. The stealthy foe had crouched for hours under a low cedar tree, waiting for him to pass.

For weeks the whole pueblo was in a state of terror. No man went to the fields without a

guard, and the women carried jars of water from the river with their eyes alert for any movement on the mesa back of the pueblo.

The children no longer ran their ball race round the planted land, kicking the ball ahead of them in a magic circle to keep the sand storms from blowing over the crops and destroying them. Instead they played dice on the hard bare ground by the pueblo, tossed beans on a brightly painted skin, or wove yucca string into strange forms in the ancient game which modern children know as cat's cradle.

Wapoh was not born until after her father's death and she remembered nothing of the ceremonies which helped him on his journey to Shipapu, the land of the spirits, where everything begins and ends and the dead live again.

His body had been laid in a cave at the foot of the mesa, and beside it were placed great painted pots for cooking which had been 'killed' by having holes pierced in the bottom that they might serve his spirit needs. Beside them were stacked ears of corn of many colors to feed him on the way, and feather plumes to guard him from evil. Broken weapons lay near, and garments which were rent and torn so that they might accompany him to the other world where material fit for use on earth could not go.

The grave had hardly been closed when it was opened again to receive Wapoh's mother, who had died when her baby was born. Wapoh liked to think that her brave father and her gentle mother were not separated for long. She did not grieve for them, for she knew, as does every pueblo child, that those who die courageously are happier in the next world than in this and would not return if they could.

Wapoh had been brought up by her grandmother, who had not been quite like other people since she had lost her daughter and her son-in-law so close together. She was gentle and kind to Wapoh, but all day she muttered to herself and her eyes had a strange glitter. The other children were afraid and shunned her, but Wapoh loved her dearly. She helped her all she could, brought her wood and water, ground the corn meal, and kneaded the clay when her grandmother was making the cooking-pots which she knew better how to shape than any one else in Sia.

Wapoh watched the boys run down to the river and disappear behind a projecting bank. She tossed aside her blanket, jumped up, and climbed to the topmost roof of the pueblo. The watchman, Sheto, who was posted there to watch for the coming of an enemy, was crouched by a broken-bottomed pottery jar which served as a

chimney from the room below. A thin column of smoke, laden with the perfume of the burning cedar, brought a little warmth into the cold brilliant air. His chilled body welcomed it.

The man's eyes were fixed on the hills which the Spaniards must cross if they were coming to Sia. So absorbed was he that he did not look up as Wapoh drew near. She followed the direction of his eyes. Nothing was to be seen except the white hills and the river with its dark open water and its frozen shallows.

She walked toward another pottery chimney out of which came a soft plume of smoke. The earthenware showed signs of the original red decoration under the blackening of its surface. She would warm her hands on its rounded sides.

She stood beside it a moment, looking off. Her eyes, trained from babyhood to detect the least movement in the country about her, searched the desert, speckled with the gray-green of the piñon and cedar trees, for any signs of life. She stood still, rigid with astonishment. On the snowy slopes to the west she had caught sight of a moving figure. Perhaps it was only a rabbit which in the brilliant sunlight seemed larger than it really was. She hesitated a moment and then ran to the watchman.

'Look!' she cried. 'Who comes from the west?'

The startled man followed her pointing finger. His eyebrows were furrowed in the intensity of his looking. There was an expression of terror on his face.

Then he sighed in sudden relief.

'It's a pueblo Indian,' he said. 'He is alone and he runs in the light. He does not seek the shelter of the trees. He is friend, not foe. Carry word to the kiva, Wapoh. I must still watch.'

The child ran down, even more rapidly than she had come up, and hurried in the direction of the river. The round adobe building, half under ground, without windows or doors, stood a little apart from the pueblo, halfway between it and the river bank. From the ground a short ladder led to the top. Through a circular hole in the roof a notched stick stuck high in the air. As Wapoh drew near, the head of a man with a feather plume fastened over one ear was just appearing, coming up the ladder from the dark interior of the kiva.

She called in excitement, 'Look to the west. One comes running. Sheto still watches on the roof.'

The man climbed out quickly and looked where the child pointed. Then he called into the kiva.

The men within followed each other hastily up the ladder until the roof of the kiva was covered with them, all looking off to the west.

The figure was very distinct now, drawing rapidly nearer. They could see that it was not a man, but a slender boy, running with the slow steady gait of the Indian who knows how to keep the pace for hours without exhaustion. Against the snow his dark body, lightly clad for running, stood out boldly. He was plainly not hiding from an enemy.

By this time the news of his coming had spread like magic through the pueblo. The men had gathered near the kiva, and the women and children were standing on the roof. All waited breathlessly to know whether the stranger brought news of life or of death.

When the boy reached the river, he zigzagged across, leaping from one sand bar to another and wading the few feet of bitterly cold water that the ice had not bridged. As he climbed the bank and came toward the pueblo, he held up his right hand as a sign that he came in peace.

The chief of the pueblo exclaimed, 'He is our friend. He is a pueblo boy,' and went forward to meet him.

Wapoh had remained standing near the kiva and she could hear all they said.

'Welcome, young brother from afar,' said the chief, with dignity. 'You will find place and food in our midst.'

He waited courteously for the boy to speak.

'I am Tyami of Acoma,' said the newcomer. His speech was the same as that of the Sia people. 'Warriors of Acoma have seen the white men cross the great river.' He pointed to the south where the Rio Grande ran past Tiguex. 'In secret they have watched, and they have carried word back to the pueblo on the mesa. I am too young to be a warrior, but I know the tongue of the white man. The chief of Acoma has sent me to listen to the speech of the stranger for you. I will warn you of his evil plans and watch him for my own people.'

'Acoma has shown itself our friend,' said the chief. 'The men of the great mesa are our brothers in blood and in speech. The new enemy has left your pueblo safe. But he has driven the Tiguex people from their houses to make room for the many white men who come now from the west. Neither mountain nor desert nor the winter's snow can hold them back.'

'I know,' said the boy. 'I followed behind them. I traveled by night and they traveled by day. In the early evening I could see where they camped by the great fires of cedar they built in

the snow. When they left in the morning, the ground was bare where the mighty flames had roared. I passed them as they slept. After the sun had sunk low on the horizon, the snow fell fast and they were buried deep under white blankets. I could see soft round hills by the dying fires where the men were curled warm under the snow. Above them were the dark heads and backs of their beasts who know not that they should lie down for shelter from the cold. The air was full of snowflakes floating like feathers. I stole by with no more stir than a breath of wind and none woke to see me.'

The chief's voice trembled with emotion as he answered.

'Only last night,' he said, 'while they slept, we saw a great light in the sky. The medicine men thought it a sign from the spirits that watch over Sia. But it was not so. The white men at Tiguex had destroyed a village and burned what they could not use. The warriors of Sia must fight to kill.'

'The white men have magic weapons,' said Tyami. 'The pueblo people cannot fight them. They must say soft words and give them what they ask, or they will have to hide on the mesa as did the people of Cibola.'

'The boy speaks the truth,' said one of the

warriors. 'I watched from the edge of the mesa and saw the white man hunting in the valley of the big river. An antelope ran out from a hollow too far away for the fastest-flying arrow to reach. The white man lifted up his long stick, which shouts aloud and breathes mistily like a man on a winter's day, and the running creature fell dead. No pueblo man has so strong a magic as that. We cannot fight. We must flee.'

The men all looked at the speaker with grave faces. Their fear was growing with every word that was said. The chief turned to Tyami, noticing how thinned his face was by the five days' run from Acoma to Sia, and said quietly, 'The boy must have food before he speaks more.'

Wapoh, who had been listening to every word, came up to the chief in happy excitement.

'My grandmother has hot beans in the pot,' she said. 'May she feed the boy I saw coming across the hills?'

The chief looked at the child and nodded assent.

'Bring the food to the kiva,' he commanded, and motioned Tyami to follow him to the round roof where the men were beginning to descend the ladders to the council chamber below.

But Tyami had noticed how small Wapoh was.

Perhaps he feared she could not bring the beans safely down the ladders.

'Let me eat on the high roof and see what the watchman sees,' he said, pointing to Sheto who was again crouched by the chimney-pot, looking toward the south. 'Then I shall know how Sia makes itself safe against the white man.'

The chief made no objection. He glanced round the horizon once more to make sure there was no sign of friend or foe, and descended into the kiva, where the interrupted ceremonial for the protection of the pueblo had already begun again.

CHAPTER IV

THE BROKEN BOWL

Wapoh led the way for Tyami up the ladder to the little room where she and her grandmother lived. She looked at him shyly, thinking how brave a boy he must be to pass the white men's camp at night and have no fear of the four-footed beasts that stood wakeful in the snow.

But she did not know half how brave a boy Tyami was. She did not know that he had gone far to the west to meet the white men when they first came to the pueblo country. He had carried warning of their coming to his home on the lonely mesa of Acoma, and had shown his people how to make friends of the strangers instead of fighting them and being killed by their mysterious weapons.

Wapoh pushed aside the skin which took the place of a door at the entrance to her home, and stepping over the high threshold beckoned Tyami to follow. By the fire which burned in one corner of the room sat her grandmother. She was talking to herself, her eyes fixed on the flickering flames. Either she had not heard the excitement

of Tyami's arrival or had paid no attention to it. As the child came to her side, she had just bent to stir the contents of a pot from which a thin cloud of steam was ascending.

In a few excited words Wapoh told her of Tyami's coming from Acoma and of the news he had brought. The old woman turned her red-rimmed eyes, dim with age and the smoke of many fires, to the boy who stood at the door, holding back the curtain in his hand.

She could not see his face against the strong light from outside, but she asked, 'Are you Tyami of the Antelope clan?' At his word of assent, she added, 'Twelve years ago I saw a young mother at the corn dance of Acoma holding a baby in her arms. She said he was named Tyami for the eagle that flies over the mesa of Acoma. As I looked at her I thought of my only daughter at Sia.'

She paused and lifted her eyes with their strange expression to the boy's face.

'She has gone to Shipapu and I would not call her back to suffer here. Son of your mother, you are welcome to the little I have.'

Tyami stepped into the bare room. On a stake driven into the wall near the entrance hung the ceremonial garments that must have belonged to Wapoh's father. A bundle of sacred plumed

sticks, wrapped in corn husks, was fastened to a beam of the roof to ward evil spirits from the home. Along an adobe bench at the right were spread the rabbit-skin blankets in which Wapoh and her grandmother wrapped themselves at night. A heap of shaggy cedar wood was stacked by the fire.

In a little alcove Tyami could see the metate, the sloping stone for grinding corn. Its gray rock surface was streaked with blue where the flour of the last grinding was left. The sheets of wafer bread, piled one on top of another by the fireplace, showed by their dark color that the meal was made from the blue corn which grew in the fields by the river. Tyami loved best the yellow meal that made the golden wafer bread. But the storehouses of the pueblos were filled with corn of many colors, blue, red, yellow, black, and white.

The grandmother brought from the alcove a beautiful bowl, decorated with strange designs unfamiliar to Tyami. She filled it with the beans from the pot on the fire, and handed it to him with a sheaf of the blue wafer bread. Wapoh noticed that as he took the food he pinched off a piece of the bread and threw it in the fire, as a tribute in memory of the dead. She always did that herself before she ate, with the thought of her father and mother in her mind. The boy

from the distant pueblo did not seem so much a stranger after that.

Tyami carried the food from the dark room into the bright sunlight outside. The pueblos had no windows and the light which in summer came in through the door was in winter shut out with the cold by the heavy curtains.

Wapoh, her hands filled with bread, followed him and the two walked together along the terrace and up the ladder to the pueblo top where the watchman sat. The women who had assembled on the roof to watch the coming of the stranger had gone back into their houses. The children lingered, curious and a little timid.

Wapoh walked up to the watchman.

'I've brought the Acoma boy to talk to you. He will eat beside you,' she said.

Sheto greeted the boy and began to question him. Tyami told him why he had been sent across the desert to Sia. He squatted on the adobe roof as he talked, dipping the wafer bread in the beans and using it as a spoon. After each mouthful he ate the morsel left in his hands and broke off a fresh piece from the corn bread beside him. When his own was gone, Wapoh gave him more from the blue sheets she held in her hand.

While Tyami ate and talked to Sheto, a group

of pueblo children gathered in front of them. They were full of wonder that a boy so little older than themselves should have been chosen to cross the desert in order to watch the enemy and to bring to a friendly pueblo word of threatened danger.

Tyami finished his beans and handed the bowl to Wapoh. She stood with it in her hand, listening to Sheto. The watchman was telling the boy about the deserted pueblo on the mesa where, long ago, the Sia people had taken refuge after the Navajos had killed their warriors and left the women and children unprotected.

'Yesterday the chief sent men to build up the walls again,' said Sheto, pointing to tiny figures which could be seen moving back and forth on the snowy heights above the pueblo. 'There we can be safe if the white men threaten.'

Tyami looked at the high mountain with the drifted snow at its foot and at the flat lands below it where the irrigated fields lay under their covering of white. Then he turned back to the pueblo. Its strong walls made it secure against raiding Navajos, but they could not protect it from the attacks of men on horseback whose weapons pierce shields and strike to the heart.

'I have seen the strength and the weakness of Sia,' said Tyami, as he started to go. 'The chief

must be told more of the ways of the white man.'

He ran down the ladder. Wapoh, who watched everything he did, fascinated, followed him. She carried the bowl in her small hands, and as she stepped on the first notch of the ladder missed her footing, and in saving herself from falling lost her hold of the bowl, which fell to the roof below, broken into a hundred pieces.

Tyami looked up, startled by the crash. He saw Wapoh, her eyes wide with horror, looking at the scattered fragments. He tried to console her by making light of the accident.

'It's not a bowl like other bowls,' said the child, aghast. 'It's a magic bowl. My grandmother painted the secret symbol of the harvest on it that we might always have a full store of corn. She fed the stranger from it, for the guest's needs are sacred. It will hold food no longer. My grandmother and I will starve.'

By now Tyami was as distressed as she. He knew how hard life was in the pueblo for those who have neither father nor husband nor son to cultivate the fields for them. He had been taught, too, how easy it is to win the ill-will of the spirits by destroying magic.

He tried to comfort Wapoh by promising to hang a prayer-plume on the wall of the Antelope

kiva. Then the men of the clan would not let the corn get too low in the storeroom of the old woman of their clan. Wapoh tried to smile at his words, but her face sobered as she stopped to gather the pieces of the broken bowl in her skirt.

Tyami ran down the ladder and crossed to the kiva. As Wapoh saw him disappear through the opening in the roof, she gave a deep sigh, and pushing the curtain aside, stepped into her home. Her grandmother still bent muttering over the fire, stirring the empty pot with a wooden stick.

CHAPTER V

THE HUNTER'S STONE

The next morning Wapoh dipped her hand into the meal bowl. She wanted some corn to toss into the pot with the simmering beans. Her small hand did not hold much, but what she took left the bowl almost empty. In the bottom was a thin layer of ground corn hardly covering the lump of salt which the Sia women always kept in their meal bowls. Whenever the rock of salt was lifted out, the hole it left filled at once. The pueblo people believed that the corn took virtue from the salt and brought more meal to fill its place when it was emptied.

Wapoh took the salt in her hand and blew a prayer across its rough surface that corn would be sent to feed her grandmother and herself. But she was fearful. She had a dread she could not put in words.

She remembered the summer before when the owl had hooted three nights in succession. His cry of ill omen had sounded the first night in the distance, the next it had come nearer, and the third night his claws held the edge of the chimney-pot above their fireplace while he called into

the darkness. Like all Indian children she knew well that misfortune would follow such a repeated warning.

But her grandmother had paid no attention. Wapoh thought perhaps the old woman's ears were dulled with age and she had not heard the note of the night-bird. Or was her thought so full of sorrow that the threat of more had no terrors for her?

The child noticed that the pueblo women spoke to her grandmother after that only when they were compelled to. They feared to share the evil which the owl's cry had menaced.

Wapoh wondered if it was fear that had made them so grudging in their gift of corn to the grandmother when the harvest was gathered. She had noticed that none of the dried deer-meat was hung at their door after the hunters had come home from the mountains. Must she and her grandmother starve in the midst of plenty?

Yet when the chief wanted the beautiful cream-colored bowls for the rain ceremonial, he asked the grandmother to make them. No one else could paint such wonderful designs of snakes and cougars and the clouds that send down the water, or burn the pottery to such a rich color. She alone among the pueblo women knew how to form the ancient symbols that invite the thunder

people and the cloud people to refresh the earth.

Wapoh sighed a little as she filtered the meal through her fingers into the cooking-pot. The beans were dark and rich in the water and the corn thickened the liquid to a rich paste. She set the pot on the hearth and brushed coals up against its sides with a bundle of twigs which stood against the wall.

The grandmother had gone to the river to bring water for their drinking. The small river which emptied into the Jemez a few miles above the pueblo had a salt and bitter taste which it gave to all the water below it. The Sia people had to drink the unpleasant draught in the summer. In the winter they put ice and snow in their water jars to lessen the unsavory taste. Wapoh's grandmother had carried with her to the river a sharp stone to break the ice in pieces small enough to go into the jar.

Wapoh stepped out on the roof with the meal bowl in her hand. She wanted to see in the better light how much of the precious corn was left. Her fears were realized. There was almost no meal in the bowl.

She stood anxiously looking off. On the river bank she could see her grandmother lift the jar and set it on the yucca-fiber ring on her head. The old woman walked up the slope with the

slow springless gait of the pueblo women who balance themselves under heavy burdens on steep and rocky ground.

As she stopped to rest part way up the slope, she met the two pueblo boys who took care of the turkeys. They were carrying corn to feed them. The corral to hold the birds was built against a storeroom and was partly roofed over to protect them from the wind and snow. The fence was made of stakes bound with yucca withes, so close set that not even the young birds could crowd through. As the boys tossed the corn into the pen, the noise of the birds was deafening. The grandmother stood, her jar balanced on her head with one lifted hand, watching the proud-looking creatures scramble to push each other aside in their eagerness for the food.

On the flat roof Tyami, with Kotka at his side, was walking toward the ladder that led to the watchman's station above. The younger boy was listening eagerly to what Tyami had to tell him about the white men. Every pueblo child was living in dread of what the new enemy might do to his people.

The two boys stopped to ask Wapoh why she was looking so anxiously in the bowl she held in her hand. Tyami saw the salt showing through the meal.

'When you grind to-day,' he said cheerfully, 'I'll sing the grinding-song of Acoma for you.'

It was long since Wapoh had heard such a friendly offer of help. For months she and her grandmother had had to grind their corn alone without the songs of the pueblo men to ease the endless rubbing back and forth of the grinding-stones. The tears were in her eyes as she said, 'The Acoma boy speaks kindly, but our storeroom is empty. There is no more corn for the grinding.'

Tyami asked no questions. He had seen the pueblo storerooms piled high with corn. There must be some mystery which the child could not tell him.

'Kotka must be the man of your family,' he said with a roguish look at the small boy. 'The chief sends us to the mesa with food for the men who are working at the top. We gather nuts on the way. One bag shall be for the quick-eyed Wapoh who first saw the boy of Acoma.'

The little girl's face brightened.

'Perhaps we'll find a rabbit by the trail,' he added, while Kotka looked at him with silent admiration.

Wapoh darted suddenly into the house and came out carrying a small milk-white stone curiously shaped to resemble a cougar. It had eyes of

turquoise set in hollows in one end, and a tiny arrowhead of volcanic glass bound to its side with sinew. She concealed it from Kotka and handed it to Tyami, whispering, 'The hunter's magic stone. It has been wet with the blood of many killings.'

Tyami's eyes shone. He knew how precious such images were and what luck they brought the hunter. But would Wapoh's grandmother be angry to have the stone loaned, even to a boy whose clan was the same as hers?

He hesitated only a moment. A glance at Wapoh's thin little face, bearing the marks of slow starvation, decided him. He thrust the image hastily in a small pouch he carried at his waist and smiled a good-bye to the child.

As they started away he saw the tall water jar, filled with the half-melted snow and ice, appearing from below as the grandmother slowly climbed the ladder to the level of her home. Her lips were moving but without speech. She glanced at the two boys as if she did not recognize them and, lifting the jar from her head, entered the house in silence.

Wapoh could see the boys disappear into the largest storeroom of the pueblo and come out again laden with food for the men on the mesa. Slung over their shoulders they had yucca bags

filled with bread and meal and they carried bows and arrows for any chance game they might meet. Tyami in addition had a curved rabbit-stick tied to his belt. As she saw them go, the bowl which Wapoh held in her hand did not seem to her quite so empty.

The walk to the foot of the mesa was not hard, but as the boys climbed the steep trail their burdens seemed to become heavier with every step. The cumbersome bags threatened to drag them backward over the edge. They clung to the rocks with their moccasined feet and steadied themselves at the steepest places with their hands.

When they reached the top, Tyami was surprised to see how large the village was in which the Sia people took refuge when their enemies became too dangerous. Since it had last been occupied, roofs had fallen in and the walls been thinned by the rain. But the rooms were being rapidly repaired by the men who had been sent from the pueblo to put the houses in order. There were already sound roofs enough to shelter all the people of Sia if the white man should prove to be a dangerous enemy.

The snow with which the top of the mesa was covered shone brilliantly in the sunshine. In the distance gray clouds formed and dissolved, drop-

ping curtains of snow or lifting to let the sun shine through. The pueblo by the river, far below them in the center of a patch of bare brown ground, looked like irregular blocks of the earth from which it had been made.

The boys emptied their bags and delivered the messages which they had brought from the chief. Then they left the busy men and went on across the mesa in search of piñon trees. Those near at hand had been stripped of their cones in the early fall, and the two had to go far to find the nuts they were seeking. Some of the low rises across which the wind swept freely were bare of snow, but in the hollows the boys had to plunge through packed drifts as high as their shoulders.

'The cloud people have not sent so much snow since my father's father can remember,' said Kotka as they paused to rest after struggling through a snow-filled ravine. 'They are trying to frighten the white men away.'

They found a piñon tree still loaded with cones, and began to collect the nuts.

'The white man fears no weather,' answered Tyami. 'He fears only the man in the long brown robe who walks beside him, carrying a cross. When that one speaks, the proudest fall on their knees and kiss the cross. But they fear no one else. Not even Coronado, the man in the gilded

armor who leads them, can put terror in their hearts.'

The boys picked rapidly. Occasionally they put a nut in their mouths but its meat did not have the fine flavor it acquires after lying on the pueblo hearth and gently warming with the heat of the fire.

Above their heads three piñon jays with brilliant blue heads scolded and protested. Their favorite tree was being invaded and robbed by strange creatures. The boys talked to the birds as though they were understanding friends, and threw nuts on the snow as offerings for forgiveness.

The pueblo people had such reverence for feathered creatures that they never killed the wild birds except when they needed their feathers for use in ceremonials. Even the ducks and geese which passed through the pueblo country in their migrations or which nested on the river banks were safe from the hunters' arrows.

As the boys left the tree, they were startled by a sound. An antelope, apparently separated from its customary winter band, was slowly moving toward them. With the curiosity of its species it had been trying to find what this stirring under familiar trees meant.

Tyami fitted an arrow to his bow and shot.

The animal was injured but not killed. With a bound it leaped toward the edge of the ridge, the arrow still sticking in its side. The patch of white hairs on its rump stood out like a giant flower as the excited creature ran.

The two boys followed at top speed. Tyami fitted another arrow to his bow as he ran. They could never have overtaken the swift animal had it not been that the antelope, in jumping over the edge of the ridge, dropped into soft snow in which it was still struggling as the boys came up. Tyami shot his arrow with a sure aim and killed it instantly.

Tyami's first thought was one of gratitude to the hunter's stone which had given strength to his hand and clearness to his eye. It would bring meat to Wapoh and to her grandmother. As he followed the breathless Kotka into the snow-drift, he pulled the stone from the bag at his waist. He dipped it in the blood which trickled down the antelope's side and whispered to it to drink.

Kotka, trembling with excitement, could not speak, but he watched every motion of Tyami's to see if the boy from Acoma knew what a deer slayer must do. He heard Tyami say softly as he bent over the antelope, 'Make the heart of the hunter glad. When you go back to your antelope

home on the mountain, send other antelopes, one following close behind another, to the wind-swept top of the mesa.'

Kotka was happy. The Acoma boy knew well the ways of a hunter. Sia would have good hunting this year.

The two boys bent over the antelope. It was heavy, but not too heavy to drag when the snow sloped downward. They pulled it from the drift and went back to get their bags of nuts before starting for the pueblo.

The way back seemed long. The bags weighted down their shoulders and their arms ached with the pull of the heavy animal which they dragged by its hind legs. They stopped often to rest. When the slope was steep it was almost as difficult to hold back as it was to move forward on the level.

Darkness fell long before they reached the pueblo, but the starlight, reflected from the snow, made it easy to find their way. Once on the trail from the mesa they lost hold of the antelope and it rolled ahead of them, breaking its horns on the rocks.

Tyami examined the skin carefully to see if it had been cut by the fall.

'Wapoh needs new buckskin boots,' was all he said.

He remembered the worn boots she wore, the white long since turned to dirty gray. What man made the boots for a child without a father? Had her grandmother learned to do both the man's and the woman's work in the pueblo?

When they reached the foot of the mesa, the boys were too tired to drag the heavy load across the level where much of the snow had melted or been blown off by the wind. Tyami sent Kotka for help. While the boy was gone, he sat on the ground watching the brilliant stars over his head. He knew that they were the home of the sky people who give the sun as a friend to the living and the moon to those who have died. As he gazed he thought they looked at him with kind twinkling eyes. Why had they not sent the lightning to destroy the white men and let him go back to the great rock of Acoma where he longed to be?

Soon Tyami heard shouting from the direction of the pueblo and some young men came racing toward him, each trying to outstrip the other and be first to reach the antelope. The victor would have a foreleg as his portion.

When they finally reached the pueblo, the chief came out to meet them and welcomed Tyami with words of praise. He sprinkled corn-pollen over the antelope's body and repeated a prayer.

Then he clasped his hands four times over the head of the animal and drew a sacred breath from the game.

After the fastest of the runners had been given his portion, Tyami said quickly, 'The rest is for the woman who first gave me food when I came to Sia.'

They all looked at him in astonishment and the chief started to say something. He checked himself, however, and without remark ordered the young men to carry the meat to the house of Wapoh's grandmother. They, too, hesitated a moment, but Tyami led the way to the ladder and they followed.

Wapoh had heard the noise and excitement of their arrival and was on the roof when Tyami reached her house. She ran inside to rouse her grandmother, who slept heavily. She brought her out to see the wonderful gift Tyami was making her. The old woman seemed half-dazed and mumbled her thanks. But Wapoh's joy was plain. When no one was noticing, Tyami slipped the hunter's stone into her hand.

'I brought it back to you,' he whispered. 'It has been dipped in the blood. It is truly a magic stone.'

CHAPTER VI

WAPOH SEES THE WHITE MEN

The next day the grandmother was cutting the antelope meat in strips and hanging it in the sun. The flesh would keep as long as the weather was cold and when the sun had dried it the meat would be good to eat for many months.

Wapoh had had a slice of fresh antelope steak cooked over the coals, and she had taken part of the meat to the storehouse of the chief and brought back a bag of corn in exchange. She was smiling and happy.

Early in the morning her grandmother had sent her with a bowl of cooked meat and beans for Tyami to the kiva. When the boy had eaten, he and Kotka helped the grandmother cut up the meat, using the sharp flints which were the knives of the pueblo.

Tyami noticed that Wapoh to-day looked less pale than usual, less like her name which in the pueblo tongue meant cloud flower. The brown of her skin seemed already richer and warmer than when he had first seen her.

The slicing of the meat was nearly done. Tyami

had picked up a foreleg, with the meat hanging from it in thin strips, to fasten it to a projecting roof-beam, when he chanced to look off. For a moment he stood like a tree whose roots have grown deep into the earth. Only his quick breathing showed he was alive. Above him, he heard a sudden cry of warning. The watchman, whose eyes had searched the horizon for many weary days, saw at last what he had long dreaded to see.

Far off on the hills which lay between Sia and the pueblo of Tiguex were visible flashes of light, like tiny darts of flame, appearing and disappearing among the low trees which dotted the snowy slopes.

The watchman was confounded, wondering what he saw. But Tyami knew in a moment. The light of the sun was reflected from the magic bonnets of the Spaniards. Those shining surfaces kept off the arrows and made flint-pointed spears fall harmless to the ground.

After his first cry, the watchman stood speechless, gazing at the distance as if under a spell that robbed him of power to move. But Tyami dropped the antelope leg he held and leaped down the ladder, shouting as he ran toward the kiva, 'The white men! The white men are coming!'

In a moment there was the greatest excitement

throughout the pueblo. Like the inhabitants of an upturned ant hill the men and women rushed hither and thither in distraction, uncertain whether to hide or to flee. Children wept and babies clung in terror to their mothers.

The men hurried from the kiva. Some carried arms, others clutched their buffalo-hide shields. All were shaking with fright.

The chief alone remained calm. He spoke in a voice of authority that could be heard above the tumult.

'The warriors draw up the ladders and defend the pueblo. The women and children hide in the rooms on the top story. The medicine men and the boy from Acoma will stay with me.'

His orders brought a return of self-control. The people hastened to obey him. The sparks of moving light had disappeared as the enemy passed behind a low hill. While the coming terror was hidden from their sight for the moment, the children were hurried into the houses and their outcry stilled. Heavy curtains were dropped before the narrow doors. Though the leather hung motionless, multitudes of eyes behind them were peering through slits to catch a glimpse of the unknown enemy.

The strangers reappeared over the crest of the hill, nearer than before. There were fifteen of

them, creatures wearing two heads, one human, and one animal, and walking on four slender legs. Beside them strode ten Tiguex Indians, apparently fearless in the midst of terror.

They drew rapidly closer. Soon the Sia watchers could see that what looked like one being was really two, a man sitting astride a beast. The animals must be the horses that had carried the white men across the desert. Each horse had a rope through his mouth which was held by his rider as he sat on his two-horned seat. While the animals walked, they tossed their heads and white foam fell from their mouths.

The pueblo people wondered. Was this froth a magic to be thrown on their fields for the destruction of their crops?

Still nearer they came. The chief, with Tyami and the wise men at his side, walked to the river's edge to meet the oncomers. There they waited, neither moving nor speaking. Their life glowed in their unwavering eyes.

They could distinctly see the faces of the white men under their heavy bonnets. Their skins were paler than the fairest Indian's and their chins were covered with beards. In their hands were shining weapons which rang against their gleaming clothes like the jangle of shell necklaces in the ceremonial dance. They sat carelessly on

their horses as if they had forgotten what it was to fear.

As they neared the river, Tyami saw in the midst of the little group of Indian guides a man in a hooded brown robe, a rope round his waist, and sandals on his feet. He towered above them all. His bare head showed a shaven circle on top. His manner was as imperious as that of the other white men, though he walked like an inferior in their midst. Tyami recognized him as Friar Padilla who had climbed the mesa of Acoma and planted a cross at the top.

As the Spanish horsemen and their guides reached the further bank, the pueblo looked destitute of life. Along the flat roofs the dark figures of men might have been images of stone, so rigid and motionless did they stand. Neither woman nor child was to be seen; only the little group waiting at the river's edge with the frozen waters separating them from the oncoming foe.

Eight short months before, the Spaniards had set out from New Spain with flags flying, horses prancing, and hearts beating high at the thought of the wealth which was to reward their adventure. As they rode along the bank, looking for an easy slope, they bore the marks of their struggle with mountain and desert, hunger and thirst, and the enmity of the men whom they

had injured. Their helmets were misshapen and dented, their cuirasses were battered and worn. Under their breast-plates their ragged doublets hung in tatters, and their boots were thin-soled and full of holes. Their weapons alone were polished and in order. The condition of those instruments of war meant life or death to the bold explorers.

They carried themselves proudly as grandees of a Spain which they were helping to make great. Their manner with the pueblo people, who were not fighters like themselves but peace-loving and industrious, was haughty and unyielding. They held Sia and its warriors in contempt. They might instead have envied the courage of the dark-skinned men, facing an enemy who rode animals of magic power and who carried weapons that had but to speak to kill.

When the Spaniards reached the bed of the river they spurred forward. The horses hesitated, plunging and snorting as their riders forced them upon the snow-covered ice. The surface offered but treacherous footing and the heavy animals with their armored riders broke through again and again. The Indian guides led the way, picking out the thickest ice and the shallowest ford, and the others quickly followed. The man in the long robe walked across the slip-

pery surface and waded through the swirling water as if some miraculous power protected him from wet and cold alike.

The chief of Sia and his companions advanced to meet them, their right hands raised in sign of peace.

The Spaniards checked their impatient horses and waited for the approach of the little band of men. They looked at them with curiosity. The natives carried no weapons except bows and arrows and were lightly dressed in buckskin moccasins, breechcloths of woven material, and cloaks of skin or rabbit fur. Their straight black hair was short in front and long like a woman's in back. Their hands were slender and well-formed and their bearing grave and dignified.

With even greater curiosity the white men glanced at the great mud house above the river bank. It seemed like part of the desert soil outlined vaguely against the blue-shadowed walls of the snowy mesa behind it.

The chief stopped at a little distance from the horsemen. His fear of the horses was like a weight holding back his feet. He turned to Tyami. 'Give the white man the word of welcome.'

Tyami stepped forward. He recognized the leader as Alvarado, the fair-haired captain whom he had known at Acoma.

In his halting Spanish he said, 'You remember Tyami, the boy of Acoma.' Alvarado looked surprised to see the boy again so far from his home on the flat-topped mesa, but he nodded assent.

Tyami went on, 'The chief of Sia welcomes the white men to the pueblo. He would be friends with his brother from far away.'

Alvarado replied, 'Tell the chief that we have crossed a mighty ocean to give him a king to rule over him in this world and a God to rule over him in the next.'

Tyami repeated the words to the chief, who listened in dignified silence.

Alvarado summoned one of the Tiguex guides to his side.

'Tell the Sia chief why we have come and what his people must do to keep the friendship of the white men.'

He sat on his horse, looking sternly at the men in front of him and at the pueblo with its throng of defenders. He had the expression of one who has never felt fear and who knows only his own will.

The Indian spoke rapidly in the Sia tongue which none of the Spaniards understood.

'My people have been driven naked and starving from the pueblo. The white men wear our

clothes and eat our food. Many more white men have just come from the south and with them Indians who have never seen snow. They shiver and weep with the cold. The white men ask for cloth and for blankets. We have given what we had but still they ask for more. They have come to Sia to take what they can from you. Give them what you must. Hide the rest.'

The chief nodded gravely.

'Tell the white men,' he said with dignity, 'that we welcome them. We will give them food and shelter in the kiva. While they eat and rest, we will gather cloth and blankets for their use.'

When his words had been repeated, he turned and led the horsemen up the slope toward the kiva. The horses scrambled up the bank with difficulty, slipping on the frozen clay. They came to a stop in front of the pueblo. As they stood with their heads hanging down, their rapid breaths were like puffs of smoke coming from their nostrils.

The riders dismounted, leaving their horses to the care of their guides. After many curious glances around them they followed the chief into the warm kiva.

The warriors quickly gathered round the horses, running from all parts of the pueblo. At first they ventured only to look at them. En-

couraged by the Tiguex men, they touched the horses and let them breathe upon their hands. One or two bold ones even sat on the animals' backs and turned the creatures' heads from side to side by pulling at the strips of leather that ran to their mouths. Tyami, who had seen horses before, and was not afraid of them, ordered corn brought to feed them. The men marveled to see the strange beasts eat the same food that they ate.

The women and children did not venture to come near. They stood on the roof above and watched, awestruck.

Tyami beckoned Wapoh to put her hand on a horse's head. After the child had once touched the soft hair, she lost her timidity and even tried to feed an ear of corn to the animal. But when she saw his great teeth and crunching jaw she snatched her hand away in fright and refused to try again. She had peered through a hole in the curtain at the approaching enemy and had feared the man more than his beast. But both were strange and terrifying.

The chief sent word from the kiva that the women were to bring warm food to the white men. The women hurried into their houses, and soon the sweet smell of burning cedar floated about the pueblo like a perfumed mist as fires were

raked together and corn and beans were heated on the flames. Before long one woman after another crossed the court to the kiva, carrying armfuls of wafer bread and bowls whose steam rose into the cold air like smoke.

The Spaniards ate long and greedily. They were hungry after their long ride, and the beans of the Sia fields were rich and full of flavor. When they had finished, the bowls were empty and the great pile of bread had disappeared. The men were rested and ready to see what cloth and furs the pueblo chief had collected for them.

CHAPTER VII

THE WITCH

WHILE the white men were eating, the chief had gone from house to house gathering what clothing the pueblo people could spare. He loaded his helpers with cloth woven from the wild cotton which the Sia people had learned to raise in their fields and to twist into threads for the weaving. He filled their arms with cloaks of buffalo-hide and of deerskin and with blankets of the braided skins of rabbits.

The women wept when they saw the garments which had been made with such labor taken from them. But the chief said to them, 'Shall we give the white men what they ask or shall we be driven from Sia, without food and without covering, like the people of Tiguex?'

The chief took something from each family; more from those who had plenty than from those who had little. When he had finished, a great pile of cloth and blankets lay in front of the kiva for the men on horseback to carry away.

Alvarado and his followers climbed lesiurely from the pillared council chamber to the sunshine

outside. When the leader saw the collected clothing, his scowl deepened and his blue eyes turned dark with anger. He spoke fiercely to Tyami who had come up to interpret for him.

'The chief says he would be friends with the white men. Tell him that the cloth must be piled three times higher than my head, or Sia shall suffer.'

The chief listened without change of expression. He looked the angry white man straight in the eye and he answered, firmly, 'Tell the strangers from the south that the people of Sia have no more to give. I have taken the clothing of the aged and the covers of the children and offered them to the white man. Let him go in peace. When summer comes, he shall have more.'

Alvarado listened to the brave words with a smile of contempt. Then he turned to his men, and said, 'Go through the pueblo and take what you want.'

As the men started up the ladders, which had been put back in place when the Spaniards went into the kiva in peace, some of the warriors made a motion to stop them.

Tyami said imploringly to the chief, 'The men of Sia can kill the fifteen white men. But Tiguex has many more. They will tear down the walls of Sia and kill. Let them take what they wish.'

The chief looked at the boy for a moment, hesitating. Then he called to the warriors, 'Let the white men pass. Sia will hunt the rabbit and the deer and clothe itself again.'

The Indians fell back, angry yet fearful. The white men's weapons clanked ominously against the poles as they climbed and their strange armor held terror for those who had never seen such things before.

A few of the warriors followed the enemy to the roof. The Spaniards could not climb, as the Indians did, without touching their hands to the ladders. They moved up laboriously, finding their weapons and their armor in the way. But they went from room to room with the air of men who are invincible. When they passed through the low doors, they had to stoop their helmeted heads, and some of the stouter ones had to enter sideways.

The women and children, when they heard the strangers coming out of the kiva, had hidden in their rooms again. They were terrified when they saw the armored men push aside the curtains of their homes. The glittering clothes which made such a strange sound when they hit the side of the door filled them with fear. They were bewildered when the men asked in loud harsh voices for the blankets which were piled in the corner of

the room. The children hid behind their mothers and began to cry. While the women were trying to soothe their terror, the men snatched up the bedding and went out.

The pueblo men tried in vain to stop them by peaceable means. To all their protests the Spaniards replied with a laugh and tossed more armfuls of warm coverings to the ground below.

Tyami kept close to Alvarado. If there was word of treachery, he could hear it and perhaps warn the chief of Sia in time. The captain with a few followers had climbed to the top of the pueblo to see something of its size and extent, while the others were busy collecting the clothing.

As Alvarado was coming down, he and his companions went into a few rooms on the third floor, which had not yet been entered, to see what they could find. The first curtain they pushed aside was at the door of Wapoh's home. When they stepped in, they almost trod on Wapoh, who was crouched by the opening. Tyami went in with them.

The grandmother was sitting by a dying fire, her unkempt hair in a tangle about her face, singing a low song to herself. Wapoh's eyes were fixed on the terrible strangers, watching their every move. One of them held out a torn rabbit-skin blanket to Alvarado.

'This will keep you warm, captain,' he said, laughing.

Alvarado looked at it with disdain.

'It will do to blanket the horse,' he answered, tossing it to the man behind him. 'What else can you find?'

He was interrupted by a scream from the old woman. She had jumped to her feet and rushed to snatch the blanket from the man who had started to carry it out of the room.

'Give it back to her who made it,' she cried in a frenzy. 'Wapoh is little and cold. She will shiver and die. The old woman can shake like the leaves in the summer. The child must be warm.'

The man pushed her roughly aside, but she resisted and clung to the blanket. Tyami gave a quick look at Wapoh. She stood facing the white men, but there was haunting terror in her eyes. He spoke to Alvarado in Spanish.

'The white man does not kill children. The girl has nothing to keep her warm. Leave the blanket for the child. The horse is warm like the deer and the antelope, and needs no cover.'

Alvarado had not noticed that Tyami had followed him into the room.

'Does the Acoma boy go with me wherever I go?' he asked in displeasure.

Tyami did not answer his question. He looked straight into his blue eyes and repeated, 'Leave the blanket for the child. The white man does not kill children.'

The man's face, lined and darkened by exposure, lightened. Here was an Indian boy who was not afraid of him. Perhaps he could act as a guide and go with him to the rest of the pueblo country.

He took the blanket from the man and tossed it to the grandmother. She clutched it, looking at him fiercely from behind her shaggy locks, and muttering words he could not understand.

'Let the old witch have it,' he said, contemptuously, and strode out of the room.

His followers looked at the old woman with new eyes. A witch! What spells might she be casting on them as they stood in her dark little room. They hurried out, crossing themselves piously as they went, glad to get into the open air again.

Some of them asked questions about the witch in the top of the pueblo. The Sia men would make no answer. But they looked at the curtained door with a new expression. The Spaniards knew then that she was a witch. They themselves had long believed that she carried an evil spirit in her old body. From now they would

watch carefully to see that she brought no harm to the pueblo.

The Sia people had a great fear of witches. When they saw anything unfamiliar moving in the night, they thought it was witches on their travels. When a crow flew over a man leaving the pueblo, they were sure that a witch was sending bad luck. When a pueblo woman cut off any hair, she burned it lest it be found by witches and cast back into her body, mixed with evil things. They had been taught that witches often took the form of bears, and brought death to innocent people. Sometimes they were suspected of sending snakes and worms and stones into the bodies of the sick. The medicine men had to draw them out in order to cure the sufferers. No one was safe from their spells.

Wapoh had not understood the dreaded name which the Spaniards gave her grandmother. But she did notice that after that day the other children did not play on the roof near her home. Tyami alone was kind to her and smiled when he saw her.

Friar Padilla, the man in the long robe, talked to the children and made them kneel before two crossed beams which he set up in front of the pueblo. While they knelt, he made strange motions of touching his forehead and breast and

repeated words in a tongue which not even the Indians who knew Spanish could understand. They felt sure he must be the medicine man of the white people, though he carried a cross hanging from his waist instead of a rattle as the Indian magicians did. The children followed him as he walked about the pueblo, for he spoke kindly to them and was pleased when they crossed themselves as he taught them to do.

Wapoh watched the white men ride back to Tiguex the next day with most of the cloth of Sia either fastened behind their saddles or on the heads of the Indian guides. With the other pueblo people she was thankful. Cold was easier to bear than the presence of the foe in their midst. But Wapoh was warm at night in the blanket which Tyami had saved for her.

CHAPTER VIII

TYAMI GOES TO TIGUEX

EVERY few days Tyami brought the grandmother a little fresh meat. He and Kotka, who followed him like a shadow, often went hunting for squirrels or jack-rabbits. They especially liked to hunt the rabbit. He was such a strange-looking creature with his big black-tipped ears, his short black tail, and his long hind legs. He was a fast runner, dodging so quickly from bush to bush that it was very hard to aim the rabbit stick. As he ran, he jumped high in the air every three or four steps as if looking behind him for pursuers on his track.

One day Tyami and Kotka were plodding along a strip of the desert from which the snow had blown away. Suddenly, from almost under their feet, a rabbit sprang up and darted away before they could recover from their astonishment to throw the stick at him. He had been lying in a hollow with his ears folded back over his body, looking like the desert soil about him. After that the boys watched near as well as far for a hiding creature.

Tyami wanted to hunt the tuft-eared gray

squirrels which made such good eating. But they were only to be found in the yellow-pine forests on the mesas. Since the white men had come to Sia, the chief would not let any of his people go far from the pueblo. If the Spaniards should return, every one would be needed to carry what clothes and food were left to the pueblo on the mesa.

A few weeks later, while the snow still covered the ground and fell heavily night after night, disquieting news came from Tiguex. The white warriors were not obeying their leader, Coronado. He had told them to take nothing more from the Indians. But they were slipping out from Tiguex, one or two at a time, and stealing from the pueblos.

One day four men on horseback came to Sia. The pueblo people did not fear so small a number, and made them welcome. They did not stay long. Just before they left one of them asked an Indian to hold his horse while he looked at the top of the pueblo. When he had come down and ridden away with his companions, the Indian found that the white man had stolen turquoise from his house and been cruel to his wife.

The medicine men and the warriors gathered in the kiva to decide what must be done. The whole pueblo was excited and angry, buzzing like a hornet's nest.

The children gave up playing the games of peace and played instead the games sacred to war. They seemed even to have forgotten what the white man called Wapoh's grandmother and let the child play the war game with them. They placed in a row four cups, hollowed out of wood, one for the north, one for the south, one for the east, and one for the west. Under one they hid a ball. Then Wapoh was asked to guess which cup covered the ball. While they played, the children felt they were calling the spirits to defend the pueblo against its enemies.

They could hear the sound of war songs coming from the council chamber. They listened, forgetting everything else. The wise men must be preparing the warriors to fight.

Tyami was in the kiva with the men. The chief had chosen twenty warriors to go to Tiguex and demand the punishment of the offending white man. The twenty were even now fasting and offering prayers. Their bodies were being painted by the medicine men to protect them against the white men's weapons and to strike terror to the hearts of the enemy. The white lines round their eyes and on their bodies made them look like strange monsters whose ways would be dangerous and terrible.

With foreboding Tyami watched the medicine

men brew the herb that gives strength to the brave. He wanted the men of Sia to go to Coronado as friends, not as warriors, but their anger against the white men would not let them listen to the boy from Acoma. They were taking Tyami with them to talk to the white men, but they refused to heed his advice. Kotka had asked to be taken, too, but the chief had told him he was a child and could not go the ways of men.

When the time came to leave the kiva, each warrior bent over the hand of the medicine man, softly drawing in the ceremonial breath which gives power to defeat the foe.

The people of the pueblo gathered by the river bank to watch the armed men and the boy start on their way. Tyami looked around for Kotka to say good-bye, but he could not see him anywhere. The boy must have hidden in the pueblo, angry because he was not allowed to go.

The little group of painted warriors started across the ice. As he was about to follow them, Tyami felt something slipped into his hand. He knew in a moment by the feeling what it was. He turned and saw Wapoh at his side.

'The hunter's stone for you to keep,' she said in a low voice.

He was startled and full of joy. With that in his hand he would become a mighty hunter. The

eagle, for which he was named, saw its prey from afar and swooped down on it. With the magic to help him, he would be such a one, quick and sure.

He said to Wapoh, clutching the stone tight in his hand, 'Some day you'll cross the desert and come to Acoma. I'll be a hunter then and bring you meat.'

She smiled and stood with the others watching him cross the river and disappear over the rise of ground beyond.

The trail to Tiguex led, after a few miles across the desert, to the Rio Grande which flowed between irrigated fields. A jagged, tooth-ridged mountain stood like a giant sentinel on the horizon, guarding the pueblos which were scattered for miles up and down the river. Purple mesas, here and there, ran into the valley like headlands into the sea.

The river was covered with snow and ice, with occasional patches of open water. Though it was shallow, the river was turbid and swift-flowing. A few wild geese were floating on the water, dipping their heads beneath the surface in search of the white roots of the rush on which they lived. The bitterly cold winter had been tragic for those birds which did not migrate to a warmer land, and many had died. As the little

band of warriors drew near, the geese showed signs of fear and flew off to a distance.

The pueblo people were surprised, for they had always seen the geese indifferent to the passing of men. 'The white men kill them for food,' said one of the Indians who had been at Tiguex after the Spaniards had come.

A dark object, that looked like a drifted log which had lodged under the low bank of the river, suddenly rose and walked toward them. The warriors stopped astonished. They saw that it was the boy, Kotka, who had not been allowed to go with them. He stood before them, shamefaced and appealing.

They looked at him sternly and threatened punishment, but in the end they let him go with them. Tyami was excited and happy to see his friend again. The two boys walked together behind the painted men, talking and planning, full of anxiety and of dread of what lay ahead.

CHAPTER IX

TAKING THE HORSES

The pueblo of Tiguex in the broad valley of the Rio Grande was four-storied, built of adobe, and terraced like other pueblos. But to Tyami's eyes there seemed something strangely unfamiliar about it.

In an open space in front of it stood a cross like that Friar Padilla had put up in Sia. From the top of the pueblo, fastened to a cedar pole, floated a great flag with designs of the heraldry of Spain embroidered on it. Tyami had never seen its like before. He and Kotka watched with amazement the lazy motion of its folds in the light wind.

Through the walls of the pueblo holes had been pierced and a rock like cloudy water, which Tyami had often seen on the mesas, set in the open places to let in the light and still keep out the cold. Tyami was some day to teach his people in Acoma to put this gypsum in their walls so that they might live in light instead of in darkness.

Close to the pueblo, corrals had been built to pen the horses of the Spaniards. The animals were full of high spirit after the rest and good

food they had been having. Some of the young ones were running round the corral, kicking and nipping each other in pretended enmity.

In a smaller corral under the shelter of some low evergreen trees were creatures at which Tyami looked in astonishment. They were four-footed animals, not so tall as deer but heavier. Their horns were short and their thick hair was white and matted. They looked like snowballs which had lost their glittering purity by being blown upon by a desert sandstorm.

Tyami had heard the chief hunter at Acoma describe the mountain goats which lived on the heights where snow lingers the year round. They were fleet of foot and so wild that they could be neither caught nor tamed. Yet these meek creatures behind the fence were like them. He had once held a handful of the goat's wool which had been torn off by a thorned bush as the animal passed. He remembered how it felt. When he got a chance he would touch the wool of these white beasts and see if it was the same.

The Spaniards and their Indian allies were lounging about the pueblo as the men from Sia drew near. Little attention was paid to them until they were close enough for the men on the roof to see their war paint and the weapons in their hands.

Then those on the lookout speedily buckled on their armor, seized their lances, and came out to meet them. The Sia men stopped about fifty feet from the pueblo and sent Tyami forward to tell their grievance and their demand. They waited, alert and watchful, while the boy and the white men talked.

The Spaniards hardly listened to what Tyami had to say.

'Tell the injured Indian to come and find the man who insulted his wife,' said the leader, carelessly. 'We cannot punish many for what one did.'

As he was speaking Coronado came from the pueblo and greeted the warlike band. He was tall and fine-looking, with the bearing of a natural ruler of men. He had the grace of a nobleman who has been the companion of kings and princes. When he conducted himself like a courtier with the simple and kindly Indians he won their friendship and their respect. But his manner was too often harsh and forbidding. The long separation from his young wife, his hardships, and his failure to find the gold he sought had made him bitter.

He quickly took command and ordered the men who had visited the northern pueblos to stand side by side. Then he told the Sia man to pick out the one whom he accused.

Slowly the Indian walked back and forth, searching their faces. The men pulled at their beards or twirled their moustaches, laughing at him the while. Some were fair, some dark, some short, and some tall. They could recognize each other's differences. To the Indian they all looked alike.

The Sia man hesitated, stopping first in front of one and then of another. They made fun of him, saying, 'That's your man. Don't you remember him?' or 'Have you forgotten me already?' He could not understand their words, but he felt the contempt in their manner.

His companions were as confused as he. One thought it was one man, others were as sure it was not. Finally he said, 'Show me the beasts the men ride. I will remember the horse whose head I held.'

Coronado shrugged his shoulders but consented. The corral was opened and the Indian invited to enter. He stood by the gate for a time, looking at the horses. Then he walked around to get a closer view of certain ones. He kept as far as he could from the heels of the spirited creatures, which snorted as he drew near or turned and ran off.

Suddenly he pointed to a handsome roan. As he walked up to it, the horse did not gallop away

but let him come close and put a hand on his mane.

'This is the horse,' said the man in excitement. 'I fed him corn while I waited. He does not fear me.'

The white men were talking to each other and laughing.

'It's Pedro's horse,' said one, turning to his companion. 'He'll beat the beast for betraying him.'

'Tell the Indian that Pedro never rides,' jeered another. 'He'd rather walk and carry his armor on his own legs.'

Amid the denials of the soldiers Coronado found it hard to decide on the truth. He finally told the Indians that since they could not decide which man to accuse, they must go back to Sia again. If any man confessed to having done the wrong, he would punish him.

The warriors were very angry. But the Spaniards were many and they were only twenty. They turned away from the pueblo, followed by the sly laughs of the soldiers, and went north over the trail by which they had come.

But they did not go far. Up the river a few miles was the great pueblo to which the people who had been driven out of Tiguex had fled for refuge. To those men, already inflamed with

their own wrongs, the men of Sia told their story.

They talked far into the night. By morning their decision was made. The jeering enemy should be punished. The Sia men and the Tiguex warriors would take the Spaniards' horses from them. When the white men had to go afoot, they would be like other men and could be shot down by the arrows of the pueblo people.

Tyami listened, full of fears. He told them that they were inviting worse sufferings. But they paid no heed to his warnings. The men of Acoma had listened to the boy who had been first to meet the white man. But the men of the Rio Grande, who had felt the cruelty of the invader, would listen to nothing but their own anger.

From the beginning of time the pueblo people had fought to defend their homes. The sons of those warriors of old must fight again or accept the name of cowards.

The plan was quickly made. That very night they would drive away the white men's horses. Without his steed the Spaniard would be as powerless as the pueblo medicine man without his magic.

Thirty of the Tiguex men were chosen to go with the Sia warriors. One of their number, who

knew his way in the corral where the horses were kept at night, was selected as the leader.

The night was very dark. The stars were hidden by a light-falling snow. At the black hour of midnight the party of fifty set out from the pueblo.

Tyami and Kotka walked with the Sia men. Tyami was sad at heart. He had seen what happened to the men of Cibola when they fought the white men, and he feared for his new-found friends.

Kotka did not know enough to fear. He remembered his proud boast that he would some day steal a horse from the white men and ride away on it. His chance had come sooner than he thought. With what awe the boys of Sia would look at him when he crossed the river on his stolen beast!

The men were unarmed, but each carried a rope of yucca fiber with a loop at the end such as hunters use in their game traps. The noose could be slipped over a horse's nose and used to guide him out of the corral. With their moccasined feet and light tread they made no sound on the snow-blanketed ground as they crept along the river bank.

The wind was beginning to rise and the snow swirled about them. At one moment it wrapped

them in a white cloud. At the next it fell away like a dropped curtain revealing a near-by tree or a sudden rise of ground. They knew they were drawing near the pueblo. They could see one or two glowing circles, dimmed by the snow, which looked like wild-cats' eyes seen in a mist. They were the flames of the fires inside the pueblo, shining through the white rock which the Spaniards had set in the walls.

The men stopped to listen. The snow blew softly against their faces and buried their footsteps behind them. They could hear a horse in the corral stir uneasily as if moving closer to his fellows for shelter from the storm. But from the pueblo there was no sound. Even the watchman must be asleep, confident that the wind and snow guarded the storied house against any attack.

The gate to the corral was close to the pueblo. If it were opened, some drowsy watcher might hear the noise. The leader told his men that they must make a break in the fence at the point farthest from the sleeping house.

The corral was made of slender stakes, set close together, frozen into the ground. The men quickly rolled up balls of snow which they packed round the base of the fence. When the snow was stamped in place, they cautiously broke the stakes one by one. The piled-up snow smothered

the sound of the splitting. Then they waited a moment. The windy silence held. Except that the horses were moving about a little, startled by the muffled breaks so near them, they could hear nothing.

The leader gave a signal. Without making a sound, the men stole inside the corral, each holding his rope in his hand. Tyami could see near him the man from Sia searching for the big roan whose head he had held. The boy slipped his noose over the nose of a small black horse. The creature stood, trembling, while he leaped to its back. He called softly to Kotka, who was close to his side, to mount behind him.

The startled horses were beginning to gallop round the corral, roused from the quiet of the night by the sudden invasion. Many of the Indians jumped on the backs of the animals they had caught. The others tried to drive the free horses through the break in the fence. They used their ropes as whips, chasing the frightened creatures toward the opening.

Suddenly there were shouts from the pueblo.

'Bears in the corral!'

The thud of galloping hoofs had penetrated the thick walls of the house.

There was not a moment to lose. Through the snow the Indians could see dark figures hastily

descending the ladders. There were the confused questions and answers of men who had hurried, only half-awake, from their warm sleeping-rooms at the sound of the alarm.

The pueblo men urged their horses to the top of their speed. Some of the riderless animals galloped with the others, pursued by the runners who had not been able to mount. The other horses scattered in all directions. Driven by fear, they were soon lost to sight in the falling snow.

Tyami clutched the mane of his horse and Kotka clung to him. Both boys felt the thrill of the mad rush through the night. The hoofs of the plunging creature under them made a beat on the hard ground like that of the ceremonial drums. All about them in the eddying snow they could see the forms of other galloping horses and hear their rapid breathing as they ran.

A big horse thundered past them and disappeared. Tyami saw in a flash that it was the roan. On his back was his captor, shouting as he went. He could laugh now at the jeering white man.

Tyami, on his spirited animal, felt the thrill of victory. He tried to forget his fears.

By the time they reached the pueblo, the snow had stopped falling. The stars shone on a white

valley, smooth except where the hoofs of galloping horses and the moccasins of running men had broken the surface.

The pueblo, which was built around a court, had been hastily enclosed and barricaded. The people were eagerly waiting for their return. The horses were led in and made secure. All the others which could be collected from the valley or the hills were driven in also. Tyami rode on his little black horse until daylight, helping to gather in the stray animals.

The morning passed with no sign of the Spaniards. The Indians exulted. The white men were helpless without their horses.

'The white men are getting ready,' said Tyami to Kotka as they were feeding the animals in the pueblo court. 'They are bringing back their lost horses from the hills.'

Kotka heard but he did not believe. The white man had been robbed of his magic. He would never trouble the pueblo people again.

CHAPTER X

THE SIEGE OF THE PUEBLO

The sun was past the zenith when from the south appeared a troop of Spaniards on their recaptured horses. At their head rode Cardenas, one of Coronado's captains. Cardenas had been the first white man ever to look into the great rift in the earth where the Colorado River cuts its way at the bottom of its mile-deep cañon. He was a bold and fearless adventurer, but the pueblo people had found him cruel to both men and beasts and they hated and distrusted him.

He came toward the pueblo, making the sign of peace. The pueblo chief with his warriors stood on top of the wall near the guarded gate. Tyami was at his side, ready to interpret for him.

In an imperious tone Cardenas demanded that the horses be returned at once and that the pueblos bind themselves not to molest the Spaniards again.

Tyami replied for the chief. In his clear young treble which they could all hear, he said, 'The Spaniard has wronged the man from Sia. He

refuses to punish the wrongdoer. The pueblo people have taken his horses and they will keep them.'

Cardenas looked with astonishment at the young boy standing proudly erect on the roof above him, speaking the Spanish tongue, and showing no fear of the armed men. His expression of anger deepened. But he could not parley with children. 'Tell the chief,' he answered, 'to come out from his storied house and talk with me. No harm shall come to him.'

When the chief understood the words he looked sternly at the white captain. He was a half-naked man wrapped in a rude deerskin cloak, but he faced the helmeted soldiers with a dignity that could match the Spaniard's.

'Tell the captain that no pueblo man trusts the word of Cardenas,' he said, and waited while Tyami repeated his words.

The Spaniards consulted together. It was plain that the Indians would not come out into the valley where they could be attacked. The pueblo was too strong to be taken by storm. Its high sides could not be scaled without ladders nor its thick walls pierced by soldiers without cannon. There was nothing to do but return to Tiguex for further orders.

As they were hesitating, some of the horses

inside the pueblo whinnied, recognizing their friends outside. The soldiers whose favorite animals had been taken shook their fists at the Indians on the roof, and would have shot them if Cardenas had not interfered.

'We will return and destroy them all,' he said. His expression as he spoke was far fuller of menace than the threatening fists of his followers.

The Indians rejoiced as they saw the Spaniards ride away. The white men had learned that they must leave the pueblo people alone.

After the last soldier had disappeared, the Indians threw open the gate and rode the horses out into the valley. They galloped about, learning the art of guiding and controlling the wonderful new animals. A few of the more venturesome women and children claimed a turn also.

Tyami and Kotka rode the black horse, turn and turn about. They raced the spirited creature along the flats by the river where the snow left by the storm was rapidly melting under the warm rays of the sun. When the horse was hungry, they walked beside him as he pawed away the snow and ate the dry grass and the cornstalks in the fields.

But their time of rejoicing was short. Three days later their lookouts warned them that most of the army of the Spaniards was approaching.

All the horses which were feeding within reach were brought inside. The barricades were quickly put in place. The warriors with bows and arrows took their places on the top of the pueblo.

The enemy carried scaling ladders and muskets. The horses were loaded with food and supplies as though their masters were preparing for a long stay. As the white men drew near, the Indians could hear them laughing and jesting. They seemed to think the capture of a house of mud an easy task.

At first Cardenas tried to take the pueblo by storm. His men advanced, shouting their war cry, 'Santiago.' They carried their ladders and attempted to scale the walls. But the Indians above threw such quantities of great rocks upon them that the ladders were crushed and many of the men were killed. Those attackers who were still some distance off were struck by arrows and nearly a hundred were injured. Some of them died after they had been carried out of range of the arrows. The pueblo men were not injured, for they hid themselves behind walls or lay flat on the roof where only their heads were visible.

But, though they were shot at and wounded, the white men did not give up. Again and again they tried to climb the walls. They made fresh ladders to replace those broken by the rocks.

They attacked on nights so dark that they only knew they had reached the pueblo by touching it with their hands. But they could never catch the pueblo men off their guard. The Indians' ears were so keen they seemed almost to hear their enemy breathe.

The Spaniards saw that they could not conquer by assault. They decided to starve out the pueblo people. They set up tents by the river and made themselves comfortable for a long siege. Twice the moon came to the full and still they camped on the river bank, waiting for the pueblo to surrender.

One day Tyami and Kotka stood on the roof looking at the enemy's camp. The white men seldom shot at the Indians now. They waited, their only menace a circle of watching eyes round the pueblo.

The Spaniards were nearer victory than they knew. The pueblo people were not troubled for lack of food. They had corn in plenty and they had killed what horses they needed for eating.

But the water in the pueblo was getting low. The river on which they had always depended was only a short distance away, but between its abundant waters and themselves the enemy was encamped. They had dug a deep well in the court but had found no water. They had finally

had to depend upon what snow and water they could collect from the roofs.

The two boys, like all the other pueblo people, were suffering from thirst. Only a little could be given to each one. Tyami had forgotten what it was not to crave water from morning till night and to wake again and again in the dark thinking he heard the beat of rain on the roof. Kotka sometimes cried from thirst and eagerly drank his own tears.

Twice the chief had decided they could hold out no longer, but each time fresh snow had fallen and they had filled their water jars again. But now for many days there had been neither rain nor snow, and there was hardly any water left. What there was must be saved for the warriors. The old women and the children must go. They could not fight and they were dying of thirst.

To-day they were to be given over to the mercy of the enemy. The medicine men had been making prayer-plumes for their safety and praying in the kiva. Tyami's heart was heavy within him for Kotka was to be sent away with the rest. He himself was to stay with the warriors, for he alone in the pueblo knew the speech of the white men.

The day was clear and sunny. The snow was almost gone and the river ran full and rushing on

its way. The white men lounged about their camp. They drew water or polished their muskets or gamed on the throw of stones they had picked up in the bed of the river.

The guards on horseback circled the pueblo, safely outside the range of arrows. Their horses walked with heads low, cropping the dry grass as they went.

The two boys could see the pueblo people assembling in the court below them. The time must be nearly come for the departure. The boy went down the ladders and joined the old women and the children, who were standing, pale and frightened, waiting for the signal to go into exile, perhaps to death.

The chief summoned Tyami and sent him through the barricade which was opened for a moment to let him out. The boy went forward, with hand upraised to announce to Cardenas the partial surrender that must be made.

The pueblo people could not hear what was said, but after a time Cardenas, with a small body of soldiers, was seen coming toward the pueblo, talking to Tyami as he came. He stopped at a safe distance and sent the boy forward to ask that the chief and a few of his followers, as many as the soldiers of the white captain, come out of the pueblo to confer with him.

A small group of the bravest went through the gate and advanced to meet the white men. When the attackers and defenders stood opposite each other, the chief of the pueblo said, 'Many times have the white men said that they do no hurt to women and children. We must believe them. We have water only for the fighters. The old women and the young children must go.'

'We will do them no harm,' answered Cardenas. Then he added earnestly, 'But let us make peace and fight no more.'

The chief looked at the white man whose words were soft but whose weapons had been quick to kill those who trusted him.

'Tell the captain,' he said to Tyami, 'that the pueblo people do not believe the white man's oath. He came from a far land and he said he would be our friend. He has taken from us our homes, our clothing, our food. He has insulted our women and killed our men. We can die in our terraced houses. We will not lie under his horses' feet to be trampled to death.'

With a gesture of having said his last word, he ordered the barricade to be opened and the women and children to be led out. Pueblo men, armed with bows and arrows, stood at the entrance to prevent the enemy from slipping in. The old women, with their faces hidden under

cloth with which they covered their heads, held the little children by the hand. Some of the little girls were crying and holding back, looking with terror at the enemy of their people.

Cardenas lifted one or two of the younger children in his arms, trying to still their fears. Again he begged the chief to make peace, promising safety to all who would surrender.

But in bitterness of heart the chief refused to listen. Too many times had Cardenas broken his word to be trusted now. The Indians went back into the pueblo and closed the gate.

But Cardenas still stood outside the walls and asked the chief to make peace. One of the pueblo men put an arrow in his bow and said he would shoot if the captain did not go back to his camp.

Tyami cried the warning to him, 'The bowsman tells you to put on your shining bonnet.'

'I am not afraid,' answered Cardenas, who had removed his helmet so that the children should not be frightened when he took them in his arms. 'You will not hurt me while I still stand here.'

The Indians admired him for a brave man, though a cruel one, and would not kill him as he stood facing them. But one warrior, to show the white captain that the pueblo people would not treat with him, shot and planted an arrow be-

tween the forefeet of his horse. At that Cardenas, though he had received no harm, put on his helmet and rode back to his companions.

The old women and the children were allowed to go to the villages of their friends further up the river and were seen no more. But the Spaniards still waited for the thirsting pueblo to surrender.

Day after day the sun shone in a cloudless sky and the stars looked down upon a dry and yellow earth. The pueblo people could delay no more. One night, with the young women in their midst, they slipped silently from the great house. They stole down ladders on the side away from the enemy's camp. They crept up on the horsemen patrolling the pueblo and attacked them. One Spaniard was killed and many wounded before the alarm was sounded. When the main army was roused, the escaping Indians were driven toward the river.

Tyami had seized the bridle of a horse whose rider had fallen. He had mounted it quickly and ridden behind his fleeing friends, keeping off the pursuers with a shower of arrows. Not until his quiver was empty did he try to catch up with the others. Many had jumped into the icy river and tried to swim across. The Spaniards in the half-light were shooting wildly at the rapid water and could not see well enough to aim. Some of the

swimmers were wounded and others, overcome by the cold of the water, were drowning.

Tyami's horse was a big powerful creature and he plunged into the river, obedient to the boy's direction. Though the water in the main channel was swift, it was nowhere above his head. Tyami drove him back and forth through the current, rescuing the drowning, and carrying the wounded on the horse's back in safety to the other shore. He told the terrified women to take hold of the animal's mane and tail and be dragged through the deepest part of the river where the swift water might otherwise sweep them away.

When morning came, those who had crossed in safety were fleeing to Sia and Jemez where they would be sheltered from pursuit. A few, prostrated, were hiding in hollows till strength came to them to go on.

Tyami had given the captured horse to the pueblo chief.

'Ride fast,' he had said. 'You they would kill. Me they will not hurt. I am a boy and I speak their tongue.'

Not until the chief had ridden away did Tyami know how exhausted he was. He had been long without enough to eat and he was thin and weak. But his thirst was gone at last. He had drunk deep draughts of muddy water as he crossed and

recrossed the river. His skin had seemed to soak up moisture as the rapid current beat against him like an angry foe.

He tried to follow the refugees but he tottered as he moved. He lay down behind a low bush. It offered shelter from the wind which was chilling his wet body. There he shivered and half-slept till the sun rose. He dreamed that Wapoh was drowning and that he was trying to mount a horse to go to her rescue. While he was struggling in his sleep, unable to rise from the ground, he woke to find himself being lifted onto a horse. The man who was helping him was a Spaniard whom he had seen doing guard duty by the pueblo. Near by were several horsemen picking up Indians who, like him, had been too overcome to escape with the others.

'It's the boy that talks Spanish,' he heard his rescuer say to a companion. 'We'll make a servant of him for Coronado.'

Back to the pueblo he had left so short a time before, Tyami was taken, sick and helpless. The terraced house was already occupied by the Spaniards. They had filled the jars with water from the river and had brought wood into the barricaded court. They were feasting in the warm kivas which were so much more comfortable than the tents in which they had been living so long.

Tyami's captor was kind to him and fed and warmed him. He was proud of having found the Spanish-speaking Acoma boy. Tyami's strength came back quickly. When, a few days later, the Spaniards abandoned the captured pueblo and returned to Tiguex, he was well enough to run at the stirrup of his white rescuer all the way.

CHAPTER XI

MAKING THE CEREMONIAL BOWL

Sia was full of fugitives from the besieged pueblo. Some of her own warriors who had gone out decorated with their war paint never came back. But those who did return were full of stories of the brave Acoma boy who had saved so many from drowning on the fatal day when the pueblo was abandoned. Kotka, the first to return, told of the robbing of the corral and of the black horse he and Tyami rode.

Wapoh listened eagerly to all the tales. She thought often of her friend to whom she had given the hunter's stone. Would he hunt now for the Spaniard or would he escape and flee to Acoma? She had forgotten that Tyami must still watch the white man and be ready to warn Acoma of danger from him. He was a boy doing a man's work. He could not run away.

Weeks passed and there was peace in the pueblos. The white men had ceased troubling the people on the Rio Grande.

One happy day news came to Sia that the whole army of the Spaniards was going to the plains to hunt the humpback oxen. Until a few

moons before the pueblo people had never heard of pale-faced men who rode on horses. Now as the sun grew warmer and the ground softer they were ready to forget them as though they had never been. They were going away forever. Only those who knew the way of the sun and the stars could find their way back from the buffalo country. Even Indians were lost in its vastness. How could the white men hope to return?

The Sia people rejoiced. They would plant their corn and squash and beans and forget the stranger and his evil ways. They began their preparations for the planting dance of April, which would bring good crops to their irrigated fields. They spoke no more of the white men except as children who wake and tell of a terrible dream.

The chief sent word to Wapoh's grandmother that she must make a ceremonial bowl for the dance. She knew the painted symbols which would keep the corn moist even when the water sank deep into the ground. Though they shunned her, the pueblo people needed her skill in moulding their choicest earthenware.

Every fall Wapoh and her grandmother gathered clay, for the making of bowls, in the hills back of the pueblo. It might be needed in the cold months when the clay beds were frozen.

But few pots had been made this winter. The pueblo people had lived in such fear of the coming of the white men that they had forgotten to practice their ancient craft.

The clay was piled in a corner of the room. On a bright windy day in April Wapoh carried a bag of it to the open space in front of the pueblo. Her grandmother was already there with a big piece of woven cloth spread out on the ground. She knelt beside it and filled her hands with clay from the bag which Wapoh had set before her. She tossed handful after handful of the powdery dirt in the air. The wind was coming from her left and as the clay fell to the ground the fine particles blew onto the cloth at her right and the lumps and pebbles fell in front of her.

Over and over she threw handfuls in the air until the bag was empty. The useless dirt was collected by Wapoh and taken to the rubbish pile, centuries old, which rose like a miniature mountain back of the pueblo.

The old woman poured the sifted clay on an antelope skin and little by little added finely powdered fragments of broken pots. She had ground them into a dust on the grinding stone which Wapoh used for making the corn meal.

The child watched her eagerly. The broken bits of the magic bowl were in the mixture.

Would they bring good fortune to the planting?

The old woman stopped stirring now and then to feel the mixture with her wrinkled hands. If she did not add enough of the powdered pottery, the bowl would crack in the baking. If she added too much, the jar would not keep its shape while she was moulding it. But the worn finger-tips had grown wise with the years. They made no mistake.

After the clay and the dust were perfectly blended, the grandmother made a hollow in the center and filled it with water. She mixed in the water with her hands, adding more from the gourd at her side. At the last she added only a few drops at a time, dipping her hand in the water and sprinkling it carefully over the clay.

When the mixture was moist enough, Wapoh helped with the kneading. She knelt beside her grandmother, her black bangs falling over her eyes as she worked. Together they pressed the damp gray mass, folding it over and squeezing it together until it was smooth and evenly moistened. Wapoh's brown hands were tired and her back ached long before her grandmother decided it was kneaded enough. The loaves of clay were ready to be made into shapes of beauty.

From the house Wapoh brought the saucer-like bottom of an old jar on which to mould the

bowl. She covered it lightly with ashes from the fireplace so that the clay would not stick.

Her grandmother sat on the ground with the pottery saucer in her lap. She took a handful of the clay which she squeezed and patted into a pancake. She pressed it into the mould in her lap to form the base of the bowl.

Beside her Wapoh was rolling clay into long coils like a rope. The old woman laid a roll around the edge of the clay pancake, turning the saucer as she did so. She pressed the coil into place, smoothing the joining as she worked. Roll after roll of the moulded clay was added until the bowl was as high as she wanted it.

Then she began to shape the jar. She turned it slowly, one hand guiding the turning, the other inside, smoothing and shaping the clay with a potsherd. After a time she shifted hands and, still turning the bowl, evened the sides and formed the rim. When she was through, she set the shaped bowl on the roof to harden in the sun for a day.

For a long while the old woman rested near the drying pot, leaning against the wall and looking off at the distant mesa as if she saw something there which others could not see. Wapoh had learned not to speak to her grandmother when she wore that expression. She would neither hear

nor answer, though often her lips moved as if in speech.

Wapoh carried into the house the damp clay that was left and covered it with a cloth. Some of it might be needed the next day to fill cracks in the drying bowl.

In the morning the grandmother worked in the room where no one could see her. She had a broken fragment of pottery which she had sharpened on a piece of sandstone. With this she scraped the bowl to make it the same thickness throughout, and then rubbed the surface with her hands to smooth away the marks of the tool.

Wapoh had the white slip ready to be put on the outside. Her grandmother was the only person in the pueblo who knew where to find the cream-colored clay she used for the slip. Not even Wapoh had seen the bank from which it came. But she knew where her grandmother hid the pale powdered earth and she had a little pot of it mixed with water for her. The old woman quickly painted the dark surface of the bowl, dipping a rabbit-skin brush in the creamy liquid. Wapoh watched the sure strokes which followed the curve of the bowl till the whole was covered.

Before the slip dried the grandmother polished the rounded sides of the bowl with the sacred polishing stone which had been used by the

WAPOH WAS SENT FROM THE ROOM WHILE THE DESIGN WAS PUT ON

women of her family for generations. The surface took on the texture of white satin which would turn to a rich ivory in the firing.

Wapoh set beside her the black paint for the decorating. Every spring Wapoh gathered great bundles of guaco, a weed which grew by the river, and boiled it all day over a hot fire. She drained off the liquid into a pot where in time it turned into a thick black paste. It could not be used for painting until it was at least a year old, and the older it was the better it stood the heat. For the ceremonial bowls the grandmother used a piece of the dried juice she had made when Wapoh was a baby.

Wapoh was sent from the room while the design was put on. The grandmother dipped her brush of yucca leaf, with the tip chewed to separate the fibers, into the black juice and painted a strange pattern round the bowl as if she saw lines mysteriously drawn on it before she began.

No one ever asked questions about the design. That would bring misfortune. But Wapoh knew why her grandmother always left a space in the circle painted round the rim. Through that opening the spirits could freely enter or leave. No ceremonial bowl should prison its visitors. They must stay of their own free will or they will work evil instead of good.

Before the sun rose the next day the grandmother had built a fire on the ground back of the pueblo. When it had burned to ashes, she made a circle of stones at its center and on them set the bowl, bottom up. Wapoh noticed that she threw a pinch of sacred meal on the ashes as she placed the stones. She built up the fire again, and around it piled a shelter of rocks.

The day was clear and still. The heat from the low flames wavered over the bowl like the prairie air on a midsummer day. Wapoh, crouched beside it, fed the fire with slivers of cedar. She kept turning anxiously to her grandmother for directions.

Before long she could see that the white of the bowl was deepening to cream. The ridges of paint were turning to a gray ash on the surface and, beneath, the design was burning into the clay.

The moment came to pull down the protecting rocks and rake out the fire. The bowl, still hot, was hastily wiped with a dry cloth to remove any ashes that might cling to it. Wapoh looked at it with admiring eyes. In the nine years of her life she had never seen a more beautiful jar. It would bring good fortune to the planting.

When the bowl had cooled sufficiently, the medicine men took it to the kiva. They said no

word of praise to the grandmother. But Wapoh could see by the care with which they carried it that they knew how perfect a piece of pottery it was.

What she could not know was that the chief, after looking reverently at its beauties, laid an arrow point in the bottom of the bowl as a safeguard against witches. Perhaps the old woman practiced only white magic and brought good fortune to the pueblo, but the chief would take no chances.

The bowl was placed beside the kiva altar. The spirits were invited to go freely in and out the mystic door, open on its rim, and bring good planting to the fields of Sia.

CHAPTER XII

THE PLANTING DANCE

Word came from Tiguex that Coronado was about to start toward the land of the rising sun. He was taking Tyami with him as his servant, and all his army was following him. They were going to Quivira on the wide plains where the buffalo were as many as the drops of rain in a storm.

When they received these tidings, the men of Sia made ready for the planting with hearts at peace. The white men would be swallowed up by the fires of the sunrise world from which Coyote stole fire for men with a burning cedar brand tied to his tail.

The irrigation ditches were opened and the ground made ready for the seeds. The men toiled throughout the hours of daylight.

But the women had their work to do as well. The houses belonged to them and they had to make them fresh and clean for the dance that came before the planting.

Wapoh's grandmother was becoming more and more tired as the days passed, and she had to leave most of the work on the house to the girl.

The Planting Dance

She sat in the warm spring sun and watched Wapoh. The child mixed adobe clay from the river bank with water and plastered the outside of the house. She wore rabbit-skin gloves on her hands and spread the clay evenly until the walls looked as fresh and smooth as a new-made pot. She did not touch the inside. When her grandmother was stronger, they would go up on the mesa and get the white gypsum which they moistened and brushed on the ceiling to make the house bright within.

Neither did she touch the clay floor. The feet of her grandmother were light on the packed adobe. Wapoh did not need to mix clay with the blood of deer and stamp it down to make a hard surface that would bear the weight of men.

The medicine men had begun the preparations for the planting ceremonial. They had chosen those men who should make offerings to the cloud people at the kiva altar and had selected the dancers.

Those who were to make the offerings had begun their four days' fast in the underground chamber. Before them, by the altar, stood the new ceremonial bowl full of clear water in which the medicine men could see the future. During the fast they painted and carved the sacred prayer-sticks which they were to offer to the

spirits. They cut notches in the sticks for prayers and, with a strip of corn husk, tied to them eagle feathers and turkey down as tribute to those who watch over growing things.

The dancers washed their hair for purification. They made foaming suds of the yucca root and water and cleansed their long locks. Wapoh's black hair shone like the wing of a bird after she had rinsed off the soap and dried it in the sun. She was to dance in a ceremonial for the first time. She was full of pride that she had been chosen, and of fear lest she forget some of the steps.

Early on the morning of the dance all the people of Sia had gone to the roof of the pueblo to greet the morning sun. Wapoh saw four men come out of the kiva, wearing nothing but breechcloths. Each man carried in his hand a single prayer-stick, beautiful with soft new feathers. They ran toward the four points of the compass, one north, one south, one east, one west. Wapoh knew that the four prayer-sticks would be planted in lonely and sheltered places with a prayer to the spirits breathed over each.

When the invocation to the sun was ended, those on the roof could see the four men returning, blowing the witches away from the irrigated fields by snapping feathers across each other and praying as they ran.

The Planting Dance

Wapoh was dressed for the dance in ceremonial clothes. She wore a tablita on her head, decorated with feathers and painted with the image of the rain clouds. Round her neck was a turquoise necklace, precious because it stole its color from the sky. In each hand she carried a pine branch with which she would beat the measure of the dance.

The child, barefooted like the others, was last of the line of women who came into the pueblo court, following the chanting men from the kiva. They walked beside the men who were to dance opposite them. The brown bodies of the men dancers had been painted blue. Over their right ears were fastened bunches of feathers. They held gourd rattles in their right hands and at their knees were tied turtle shells that rattled as they moved. Round each man's waist was a fox skin with the busy tail hanging down behind over the beautiful ceremonial skirts which had been hidden from the covetous eyes of the Spaniards. Fastened to armlets and ankles were pine twigs like those the women dancers carried.

Back and forth in front of the pueblo the dancers moved to the beat of the drums and the soft cadence of the chanted song. The women shuffled their bare feet in the loose dirt of the court, the men in their moccasins leaped in the

air as they shook their rattling gourds in time to the music.

Wapoh's face was very serious as she danced. The dance must be worthy of the spirits who would send the rain for the planting. She must make no mistake. As she thought of the pueblo storerooms so nearly empty, she listened more carefully than ever to the words sung to the rhythm of the drum.

White floating clouds, clouds like the plains, come and water the earth. Sun, embrace the earth that she may be fruitful. Moon, lion of the north, bear of the west, badger of the south, wolf of the east, eagle of the heavens, shrew of the earth, elder war hero, younger war hero, warriors of the six mountains of the world, intercede with the cloud people for us that they may water the earth. Medicine bowl, cloud bowl, and water vase, give us your hearts that the earth may be watered. I make the ancient road of meal that my song may pass straight over it — the ancient road. White-shell bead woman, who lives where the sun goes down, mother whirlwind, Mother Yaya, creator of good thought, I ask your intercession with the cloud people.

While the men were singing the chief made a trail of the sacred meal of corn and powdered shell around the edge of the pueblo. One of the medicine men brought the ceremonial bowl to him from the kiva. He looked for a long time into the water, murmuring a prayer.

At the end of the line of dancers was a great heap of the pueblo seed corn with the mother

WAPOH WAS DRESSED FOR THE DANCE IN CEREMONIAL CLOTHES

ear, a perfect white ear with a tuft of down at its tip, placed on top. The chief walked to the many-colored pile, carrying the bowl with its decoration of symbols of fertility in his hands. The singers followed him and stood about him while he sprinkled the water on the corn, chanting appeals to the cloud people to water the fields and to the rainbow people to smile on the earth.

The dancers went back to the kiva to rest for a time. While they were gone two men, the koshare or delight-makers, ran into the court dressed in imitation of Spanish soldiers, riding sticks covered with cloth for horses. One, with a beard of corn husks painted black, acted the part of Coronado crossing the plains to Quivira.

Though the terrifying white man was still only a few miles away, the koshare made fun of his haughty manner, his restless adventuring, and his curveting steed. The pueblo men and women watched and smiled. Wapoh, peeping from a corner, smiled too. She did not understand the humor very well, but she was happy to see the people glad after weeks of dread and sorrow.

When the dance was nearly finished, clouds began to appear on the western horizon. Those who first saw them looked at each other and nodded. The medicine men and the dancers paid no heed to the sky. They were intent on the

music and the dance. The dust began to rise in the air and blow from the fields and from the desert upon the watchers and those taking part in the ceremonial. The clear light of afternoon took on a yellowish color. Still the dance went on. The men dancers leaped as high as ever and the women moved their pine branches in perfect time to the beat of the drum.

When the long ceremonial was over and the dancers were walking with slow dignity toward the kiva, a few scattering drops of rain fell. They made tiny holes in the dust of the court. Then more and more rapidly they came until they drew slanting lines against the heights and hid the river and the mesa behind wet curtains.

Wapoh sat at the door of her house, watching the water splash from the roof. She was glad to rest after the long hours of the dance, but her heart was light. The irrigation ditches must be full to overflowing, soaking the fertile earth and making it ready for the sprouting seeds.

CHAPTER XIII

HUNTING THE HUMPBACK OXEN

THERE was a great stir in the pueblo of Tiguex one morning in that spring of 1541.

Coronado, disappointed in his dream of finding wealth in the land of the terraced houses, was setting out on a new adventure. He had heard of a rich country, Quivira, on the broad plains farther to the east.

Many years before, a Quivira Indian had found his way to Pecos, married a pueblo girl there, and never returned to his home. During the winter he had come to Tiguex and told Coronado of the wonders of his native land. The Spaniards called him the Turk, because he looked like men they had known in a far country across the sea. He could not understand all the questions Coronado asked but he tried to please him with his answers.

He described the grassy prairies and the great shaggy animals, called humpback oxen by the Spaniards, which roamed across them. When he saw how eager the Spanish general was in his questions about gold, he assured him there was plenty of it in his country. The more pleased Coronado seemed, the more gold he said his people had.

He told about a river in the plains which was six miles wide and had fishes in it as big as horses and many very large canoes with twenty rowers on a side. The canoes carried sails and their lords sat on the poop under awnings with a great golden eagle on the prow. The lord of that country took his afternoon nap under a tall tree on which were hung a great number of little gold bells which put him to sleep as they swung in the air. The ordinary dishes were made of wrought plate and the jugs and bowls were of gold.

The Spaniards believed what he told them for they wanted to hope again, and he spoke with ease, as though he were telling the truth.

Coronado decided to go in search of this land of promise. When he told his men he was going, not one would consent to remain behind. On their explorations they had so far met nothing but hardship and disappointment. Now that they were to find riches they claimed the right to share with their general.

On the sunny April morning the white men and their Indian allies set out from Tiguex, leaving no one of all their army in the pueblo. The priests who had followed them from New Spain blessed them and their venture before they started, and rode with them on the trail to the

east. Tyami, the servant of Coronado, walked beside his master's stirrup and, when they camped at night, cared for horse and man.

The boy was glad to see the great plains where in years past the pueblo people had hunted when their food was scarce. He need have no anxiety for Acoma as long as the Spaniards wandered on the endless flat lands where the buffalo fattened for the killing.

The thick-wooled sheep had been left in the corral at Tiguex to be fed and cared for by the Indians until the Spaniards returned. The army on its march would have plenty of fresh meat for the taking and could save their sheep for later need.

The horses were full of high spirits and carried their burdens of food or armored men with ease. The turbid waters of the rivers were in flood and the hills wore their delicate spring green. The horses smelled the perfume of the desert flowering and knew that food for them would be abundant.

The trail led along the foot of snow-capped mountains which released the melting snow in rapid streams for them to cross or withheld the waters and let them pass dry shod over the deep-cut rain-roads where the freshets ran in time of flood.

A broad valley opened in front of them with Pecos, the most easterly of the pueblos, on a hill at its center. The great houses, grouped together about the courts, were many stories high. Four stone watchtowers on the roofs rose still higher. Through the slits in their sides a lookout could be kept in all directions. Pecos could never be surprised by a foe. While the enemy was still many miles away, the alarm of his approach would be given and the pueblo made safe against attack.

Coronado rode ahead of the army on his great chestnut horse. Tyami, with his hand on the animal's mane, ran beside him. The people of Pecos came out to meet them, playing on flutes, beating drums, and offering gifts of welcome to the leader of the white men. They fed and sheltered the soldiers for a few days until on a fair May morning the Spaniards were ready to leave the last of the pueblos and march into the land of the buffalo.

As they left the valley and moved out through low hills to the plains, the Turk walked on one side of Coronado, telling him more about the wonders of Quivira. Tyami did not know the speech of the plains Indians but as he heard the interpreter's words he felt as if he were again a child in the kiva on a winter's night listening to coyote tales of what never was or to stories of

men who turned into eagles and flew to the farthest star.

Late one afternoon Coronado's chestnut horse was walking with head bent, tired after the long day's march. Suddenly, as they came over a little rise, he lifted his head and stopped abruptly, his ears pointed forward and every sense alert. Off in the distance were moving objects, dark brown, crossing their path.

Other horses had stopped, too, and all were looking intently at the four-footed creatures ahead of them. The horses were evidently uneasy. Some of them tried to turn on the trail and go back.

'The humpback oxen! The shaggy buffalo!' the men began to shout. Muskets were loaded and arrows fitted to bows as the army moved forward. Some on fast horses galloped toward the herd, forcing their unwilling steeds to approach the strange-smelling beasts that filled them with terror.

Coronado put spurs to his horse and rode forward rapidly, leaving Tyami and the Turk to follow on foot as fast as they could.

By this time the buffalo had begun to move off with a clumsy galloping motion. Their hair was thick and long in front and the beards of the bulls would have swept the ground had they not lifted

their heads in the air. Their short broad horns hardly showed in the mass of reddish brown hair on their heads. Their tails, with a long bunch of hairs at the tip, they carried erect like a scorpion's as they ran.

The first horseman to reach them scattered them in all directions. Some galloped toward the distant hills which the army had just passed. Tyami, with the quick instinct of the hunter, ran in front of them to cut them off. Though he had never seen such terrifying creatures before, he was too excited to feel fear.

A group of cows with young calves was being chased in his direction by some men on horseback. He had his bow ready, with an arrow fitted in place. Suddenly, as he ran forward he stumbled on an obstruction under his feet. When he recovered his balance, a calf, with three or four arrows sticking in its back, was coming directly toward him. Tyami did not know that to kill a buffalo with an arrow, one must shoot from the front and pierce the heart. He had no time to think. He snapped his bow. The calf did not swerve but received the arrow full in the chest. It staggered a few steps and fell to the ground.

Tyami knelt by the animal's side and drew the hunter's stone from the bag at his waist. He dipped it in the blood and whispered the hunter's

prayer. He thought exultantly as he did so that with Wapoh's magic gift a boy could hunt like a man.

As some Spaniards galloped up on their snorting terrified horses to see what he had killed, he hid the stone hastily and bent to pull out some of the arrows that were sticking in the calf's hide and put them in his quiver.

That night they all had fresh meat to eat and buffalo hides were spread out to dry. The leather of the oxen of the new world could be used for shields and saddles and soles of boots. The white men ate until they could eat no more, then slept long on the warm earth.

There was no need to dry the meat they did not eat. They were in the buffalo country now and would find game wherever they went.

The horses fed all night on the new grass of the prairie and were full of spirit when it was time to start in the morning. They shied in terror from the green buffalo hides and had to be held while the uncured leather was strapped to their backs.

The men were as full of energy as the horses. The rich and ample food gave them hope that all the wealth they found would be in equal abundance. They sang Spanish love songs as they rode, and laughed and joked like boys on a holiday.

Only the priests, the men in the long robes, did not frolic and make merry. They were in search of something more difficult to win than gold. They sought the souls of men. They had seen four-footed animals whose meat was good, but they had not yet seen the savages of the plains to whom they could bring the word of God. They seldom rode, but walked instead with the Indian guides and talked to them of the great kingdom to which they could belong, a kingdom ruled over not by man but by God.

Friar Juan de Padilla liked especially to talk with Tyami. He remembered the boy at Sia and he asked him questions about his own home on the rock at Acoma. He taught the boy many Spanish words which he did not know and talked to him of the fair land of Spain across the great waters. He described its fruits and animals, its princes and palaces. Above all he pictured its mighty houses of God with towers that pointed to the sky. Tyami listened and marveled. He felt a strong liking for the skirted man who feared no hardship and who never spared himself.

The priests often gathered the white men about them in the open plains to worship their God. Tyami knelt with the others. He liked to listen to the words of the man who lifted the cross in his hands as he spoke. He respected the God of

the white men. When he returned to Acoma he would offer prayer plumes to Friar Padilla's God as well as to the spirits that watch over the pueblo people.

Day after day, in the warm sunlight, the army marched across the plain. They might have been moving over a green ocean whose waves were stilled. The only change came when a herd of buffalo was sighted and the excited soldiers scattered for the hunt. Some never returned. They had followed the game too fast and too far. When they tried to retrace their steps, there was no landmark to guide them, neither tree nor stone nor shrub. Some walked for days and in the end, as if they had been led in a circle by some evil spirit, found themselves where they had started. The plains Indians knew how to follow a straight line, but the white men turned always a little to the right or to the left and so came back always to their own footsteps. As time passed, the water grew scarcer. Sometimes they had nothing to drink for days. At other times they drank from buffalo wallows, damp places in the prairie which had been trampled by the 'oxen of the plains.' The hollows had deepened through the years as the animals climbed out with the mud clinging to their long hair, and more water had gathered. Often there was nothing but thin mud in the

bottom, but it moistened the parched bodies and tongues of the adventurers.

The number of buffalo never seemed to grow less. The advance guard of the army shot all they could use and drove the rest before them in headlong flight. As the animals galloped away in terror, they trampled on each other and many were killed in that way.

One day a narrow ravine crossed the path of the army and the buffalo, fleeing from the soldiers, fell into the hollow. In a few moments they had filled it entirely and the rest of the terrified herd crossed on top of them. Some of the men on horseback, who were following the buffalo, did not see what had happened and fell in with their horses. They had great difficulty in getting out again.

Weeks of marching across the same endless level passed, and the Spaniards ceased their songs. The horses were eating abundantly of the rich grass and losing their early fear of the buffalo. The Turk, who was guiding the army, encouraged the men with stories of the wealth ahead, but hope was dying in the hearts of his hearers.

Occasionally they met a band of the wandering Apaches, the enemies of the settled pueblo people. The men were large and handsome, but dirty and

THE NUMBER OF BUFFALO NEVER SEEMED TO GROW LESS

unkempt. They followed the buffalo wherever he went and lived on what he had to give them. They used his meat for food, his bones for tools, his sinew for thread, his dung for fuel, his hide for clothing and tents. They traveled with their dogs, the burden bearers of the tribe. Saddles of buffalo skin were tied on the backs of the dogs. To the saddles they fastened their tent-poles, with the ends dragging on the ground, and loads of hides and food piled across the center. When the loads became disarranged, the dogs howled till their masters set them right again.

No one with Coronado spoke the Apache tongue, but the Apaches knew the sign language which all Indians can understand. They could tell the Spaniards nothing of the country they were seeking nor of the gold which the Turk had told them they would find. They knew nothing but the flat world in which they lived, with the round bowl of the sky set down over it.

The white men still held on their way. Once in a while they came to tiny lakes, some salt and too bitter to drink. The grass grew tall and rank about them and the horses liked to linger on the shores and eat their fill.

Coronado, with Tyami and the guides at his side, rode ahead of the others. Many times a day he would stop and direct his companions to make

piles of dung or rocks to show the way to those who followed.

One day he was waiting in a narrow ravine, like a knife-cut in the level plain, for the army to overtake him. There was a small stream in the bottom and close-set trees whose upper branches barely reached to the top of the steep sides. Paths, made by the buffalo in their search for water, led down from the prairie above.

Coronado was a little anxious at the delay in the arrival of the soldiers. There were black clouds toward the west and their lighted edges were curling and twisting ominously. He liked to have his men together when there was a storm.

Tyami was fearful that the others might not be able to find the way after the coming rain and wind had washed away their tracks. He climbed out of the ravine to see if there was any sign of the army, and to be ready to show them the easiest way down when they came.

He could see them at a distance, coming as rapidly as they could, the horsemen first and the men on foot straggling behind. They were hurrying to find shelter before the storm should break. The last of them under Tyami's guidance had barely reached the path to the ravine when an icy wind struck them like a blow from a hammer. Tyami, who had just started down the path be-

hind them, was knocked off his feet. He managed to crawl below the edge where the wind could not catch him with such force, and reached the bottom in safety. The shivering men thought the worst was over when, with a noise like great rocks falling from a mountain-side, hailstones as big as bowls fell all about them until the ground was covered halfway to their knees with the frozen balls. The horses were terrified and broke away. Some dashed up the sides of the ravine and had to be forced down again. The helmets of the soldiers protected them from the worst blows, though the metal was badly battered before the storm was over. They tried to hold their shields over their horses' heads and to protect them with buffalo hides, but many of the animals were wounded and cut.

Tyami kept Coronado's horse from getting away by blinding its eyes with his own cloak, but both he and the horse were bruised by the terrible blows they received.

The noise of the storm was so great that the sound of the bowls and gourds of the army breaking under the hail was not heard at all. It was not until mealtime that the soldiers knew that they had no dishes and no cups in a country where the natives had no utensils and used only their hands and their flint knives in eating.

June came and still they had not reached Quivira. Thirty-seven days they had wandered across the plains, and the land they were seeking seemed no nearer than when they had started.

One afternoon the hunters sent word that they were bringing in a man of a different tribe from any they had yet seen. Coronado was resting in camp when the word came. He bade Tyami bring him his horse that he might go out to meet the man. He also sent for the Turk to go with him. Tyami ran at his side. Before they had gone very far, they met the hunters. With them was a tall Indian, lightly clad, with face and body painted red and black. He spoke the sign language and told them of the land of Quivira for which they were searching. He said the houses were not built of stone in many stories as the Turk had told them, but were of straw and skins. They grew little corn and had only a few small villages. He told them it was a forty days' journey to Quivira from where they were, over the same plain across which they had been traveling for weeks.

Coronado knew now that the Turk had been lying. The false guide confessed that he had told some untruths about his people, but he still insisted that Coronado would find much corn and

many men in their villages. Coronado trusted him no longer and had him put in chains.

When this news was told to the soldiers, they were discouraged. They were weary of the endless journey. Their corn had given out and they had only meat to eat. There was much complaint and muttering against their leader. Coronado knew their discontent and quickly made his plans. He summoned Don Tristan de Arellano.

'I put you in command of the army,' he said. 'Return with the men to Tiguex and there wait for me. With the guides and thirty of my best horsemen I shall go forward to Quivira.'

There was still more protest and rebellion when the men heard the orders. Some who had been most eager to return now demanded that they be allowed to go with Coronado, but the general was firm. He had chosen the men who were to go with him and he would have no others.

Tyami was to return with the army. He was too young to make the long journey which would wear out strong men before it was ended.

The next day the little party started. Tyami watched the thirty men, the bravest of the Spaniards, with Coronado at their head, ride off to the north. Friar Padilla, on a strong horse, rode beside the general, his long skirt tucked into his girdle. The treacherous Turk, chained to the

stirrup of a Spanish soldier, was forced to go also.

As he saw the group of fearless men fade into specks in the distance, Tyami felt he was looking upon them for the last time. He did not know what bold adventurers the Spaniards were nor what hardships they could endure without flinching.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CAPTURED EAGLE

The army lingered for two weeks in the region where Coronado left them. They spent the time hunting buffalo and drying meat for the long journey back. They killed over five hundred bulls. When they were ready to start, they had all the jerked beef they and their horses could carry.

During the hunting many of the men disappeared for days at a time. When they could not find their way to the camp, they ran about the country as if crazed, going first in one direction, then in another.

Each night Arellano inquired who was missing. He gave orders to shoot guns and blow trumpets and beat drums and build great fires in the hope that the lost hunters would hear or see and so return to safety.

Those who knew best how to find their way in a flat country stood still, after wandering about in pursuit of game, until the sun set. Then they knew their direction and could return to the camp. Others not so skilled were helpless and despairing until rescued by their companions.

The horses found the return journey a long and weary time. There was no corn for the men nor for them. They had hard work to do, and nothing but grass to eat. In the hunt they had to chase the buffalo, and on the march to carry heavy burdens. And day after day the sun blazed in a cloudless sky.

When the summer heat was at its height, the exhausted army drew near to Pecos. Arellano had meant to rest his men some time in the terraced houses on the hill. They thirsted for the spring water in the court and for the newly harvested corn. But when they came in sight of the pueblo they saw that the gates were closed and that men with bows and arrows were on top of all the watchtowers.

The Pecos chief would not parley with the Spanish captain nor admit any white man to the pueblo. Arellano saw that it was unwise to linger any longer. His men must find a fit place to rest as soon as possible. He sent for Tyami, the Indian boy who could speak many tongues.

'The army will march to Tiguex,' he said to him. 'I leave you here. Show the chief that Coronado is his friend. Tell him that the general of the white men will come before the snow flies. Bid him, as he values his own life, to make him welcome to the pueblo.'

Tyami would not threaten, as seemed to be the habit of the white man, but he thought he might make the chief of Pecos give up any fear of Coronado.

The boy stood beside the trail in the hot sun while the army started on its way to Tiguex. The men wore their heavy armor in fear of arrows from the pueblo. Their tired horses stumbled as they went by. The soldiers who were walking carried their weapons as if the weight were more than they could bear. The Indian allies, laden with the dried meat, stepped lightly on their moccasined feet.

When the last one had disappeared across the valley, Tyami went up to the gate of the pueblo. It was quickly opened to him.

The chief met him and made him welcome.

'Why did you fear to open to the army?' asked the boy.

'Our medicine men told us the white men had died on the great plains,' the chief answered. 'They said these were witches, not living men. We were afraid.'

Tyami looked astonished.

The chief went on, 'He that they called the Turk hated the white men. He led them on the plains to die. How could we think they still lived. Their horses could scarcely walk, and the bones

in their faces were those of men who had been long in the grave.'

Tyami told him that the white general had learned of the Turk's treachery and chained him to a soldier's horse. New guides were leading Coronado to Quivira.

'Pecos does not fear the white men's leader,' said the chief. 'The gates will be open when he comes. Pecos fears dead men and those who steal what is not given.'

Tyami saw that he need stay no longer. Coronado would be welcomed if he ever came. But the boy lingered. The pueblo was full of the busy, humming life of the summer season. The men were cultivating the corn and building new irrigation ditches. The women were weaving the cotton which had been brought from the Rio Grande valley. The clans of the summer people were making ready for their dances.

The Indian boy who had been following the life of the white man for many weeks was happy to live for a time with those whose ways he could understand.

He made friends with Wasi, the Antelope clan magician of the hunt. Wasi was a tall, strong man who knew every fold of the mountains and every dip of the valleys about Pecos as a creeping child knows the floor of the pueblo. He told

Tyami many tales of great rabbit hunts, of tracking the goats on the snow peaks, and of witch bears which can never be caught.

One day Tyami saw him twisting strong ropes of yucca leaf and nooses of the sinews of deer. He knew that some great trapping must be at hand. He touched the hunter's stone at his waist and gained courage to speak.

'I carry a magic hunter's stone of the Sia,' he said in a low voice.

Wasi looked up quickly.

'Word came back from the plains that the boy from Acoma was a mighty hunter,' he answered. 'Show me the stone.'

Tyami placed it in his hand. The magician's eyes shone. He could see it was a very ancient image. He examined its surface, dyed with the blood of many killings, and noted its shape like the cougar of the mountains.

'It has drunk deep,' he said reverently. 'He is indeed a mighty hunter who carries this stone.'

Tyami did not speak. He waited in silence for more.

'I go to-morrow,' Wasi went on, 'to the high mountains to hunt for the golden eagle. Would the Acoma boy wish to go with me?'

Tyami tried to answer quietly, but his excitement sounded in his voice.

'Whatever the hunter asks, the Acoma boy will do,' he answered. 'He will climb high cliffs and carry heavy burdens on his back.'

The magician nodded toward the kiva.

'To-night,' he said, 'the medicine men will make us ready.'

Not another word of the hunt was said. Tyami sat the rest of the day with Wasi, twisting ropes and tying sinew till the sun was low.

The crops in the Pecos fields had been growing well. After the deep snow of the winter, the ground was moist and the rivers ran full and noisily on their way. The harvest dance must fitly celebrate the gratitude of the pueblo to the cloud people who had given the earth their best gifts.

But there were not enough feathers for the dance. The pueblo kept few turkeys, not enough to provide down for the prayer-sticks and plumes for the altars, and there must be many eagle feathers for the dancers. The medicine men were sending Wasi to trap the sacred king of birds whose nesting-place in the mountains he alone of the pueblo knew.

That night in the kiva the secret ceremonial to prepare Wasi and his companion for the hunt was held. Prayers were offered to the cougar, father of game, to send the eagle into the snares of the hunters. The sun was implored to give

clearness to their eyes. Offerings to the cougar were laid to the north where his mountains were. Those to the sun were placed to the east where he would rise in the morning to show them the way. The hours passed with the singing of songs and the telling of stories of the brave deeds of Pecos hunters who had long since gone to Shipapu, the land of the hereafter.

Early in the morning the two started on the way, carrying bows and arrows, bags filled with thongs and ropes, and a little meal for food. Wasi wore a bear claw at his waist to bring him fortune in his hunting.

There had been a little storm in the night and the air had the strange musty smell of desert after rain. They walked beside the muddy river which ran by the pueblo, following the valley as it narrowed to a ravine between sharp cliffs. The river no longer carried silt but was rapid and clear, the home of darting speckled fish. The overhanging trees were the nesting places of birds whose song and bright plumage gave life to the quiet valley.

The first night the hunters slept by the stream. The next they were part way up the mountainside and lay at the foot of a great yellow pine. The third day they were climbing when Wasi pointed up.

'The eagle!' he cried.

Tyami followed his pointing finger and saw the bird, hardly more than a speck in the sky, swinging lower and lower in great circles until he lighted on a crag above their heads. He settled himself with folded wings and eyes alert to see the world about him. The bird was too far away for Tyami to catch the color of the tawny feathers on his neck. But his size and his proud bearing could belong to no bird except the golden eagle whose feathers were coveted by every pueblo from Pecos in the east to Cibola in the west.

Wasi was rejoiced to have found the eagle again, and the two began their preparations for the trapping. They first built a cage of green twigs bound tightly together with thongs of leather. In an open space below the eyrie of the eagle Wasi set Tyami to work digging a pit. The boy cut the earth with thin layers of stone broken from the neighboring cliff, and scooped it out with his hands.

While he was busy, Wasi went back into the valley where he had seen some rabbits in a sunny opening. He took some fiber with him to make a snare. A live creature must be the bait for the greatest of birds.

All that day Tyami labored. The digging was slow and heavy work. The ground was full of

roots and stones and the earth was hard and dry. Wasi did not come back that night. Tyami curled up at the edge of the hole he had made and slept the sleep of exhaustion.

Early in the morning, when he had made the pit the proper depth, Wasi appeared, carrying a jack-rabbit in his arms. The creature's legs were fastened securely together and it lay quietly in its captor's arms as if knowing it was useless to struggle.

In the center of the pit Wasi placed a hollow stone which he filled with clear water from the stream. Crouched beside it, he could see as in a mirror the image of the eagle flying overhead and be prepared when the bird swooped down on its prey.

Under Wasi's direction Tyami brought branches of trees and lightly covered the mouth of the pit. In the middle of the brush they fastened the rabbit securely. Then they lifted the branches a little and crept into the hole. They sat side by side in cramped positions in the bottom all day, catching glimpses of the eagle circling overhead but apparently indifferent to the prey so temptingly displayed below him.

Then suddenly, as the sun neared the edge of the mountains to the west, the great bird dropped, with the speed of a falling stone, and, almost

before the hunters could shift their position, had seized the rabbit in its claws and struck upward again.

But the powerful beat of its wings on the air was vain. It could not rise with its captured prey. Something held it to earth. But its claws did not release their hold. In a flash Wasi and Tyami reached through the brush. Each grasped a leg of the eagle and dragged the bird down into the pit. Tyami threw a bag over its head while Wasi pinioned the legs together. He freed the rabbit from the claws. Its binding thongs had been already torn by the pull of the bird. With a quick leap the creature jumped from the pit and escaped down the mountain-side.

Wasi held the captive's body between his knees while Tyami dragged the cage to the edge of the pit. The two forced the bird inside and fastened the last bar in place before the eagle had freed his head from the bag which blinded him and torn the yucca rope from his feet. His feathers were rumpled and his eye sullen with rage, but as he stood erect and faced his captors, he was still a proud and unconquered creature.

Wasi could hardly contain his joy.

'Pecos has never caught so noble a bird,' he cried. 'The hunter's stone is magic.'

Tyami smiled too. His heart was beating fast

with excitement. He could not take his eyes from the golden feathers on the eagle's neck. They were standing up straight with rage. Would Wasi let him pluck a few to take back to the Antelope kiva at Acoma?

Before the eagle had been safely secured and they could start on the return journey, dusk had fallen. They could not go far that night, perhaps no further than to the valley below. Each threw over his shoulder a yucca rope, fastened to the top of the cage, and held in his hand a bar which extended beyond the reach of the bird's claws or beak.

It was slow and difficult going. They had to balance themselves on the steep slope and keep the cage steady in spite of the agitated movements of the captive. That night they slept by the stream, seeing far above them in the silver light of the moon the cliff where the eagle had made his home.

The next day the bird was quieter and no longer wore himself out with useless struggling. He gripped his claws in the floor-twigs and held himself steady. The ground was more even and the hunters could walk abreast. They shifted sides now and then to ease their shoulders, and rested in the hottest part of the day.

Tyami could see that Wasi was trying to take

most of the weight on himself and spare his young companion. The boy stiffened his muscles and fought off his weariness.

The eagle refused to eat, but his eyes were as fierce and his air as proud as in the first hour after he was caught.

Some miles from the pueblo, they met Pecos men working on the ditches. They relieved Wasi and Tyami of their heavy burden and bore it in triumph to the pueblo. The eagle was put in a large cage and set on the roof where all could see him. He soon became accustomed to his new home and ate eagerly what was brought to him. But to Tyami he always looked like an exile dreaming of his mountain eyrie and of the ocean of moving air into which he used to plunge.

Weeks passed and no word came from Coronado. His bones were probably even now whitening on the limitless prairie where not even a flying bird can see the way.

Tyami must say farewell to his Pecos friends and go west. When he left he carried a great bundle of eagle feathers under his arm. Wasi had plucked them for him and wrapped them in corn husks for safe keeping.

'Hunt with me again,' he had said. 'When the white men have left the pueblos in peace, the men of Acoma will come to kill the buffalo.

Let Tyami come, too, and trap the sacred birds with Wasi on the mountain-top.'

Tyami had promised. But as he looked back at the four watchtowers and the hill covered with its high buildings, he wondered if he would ever see it again. The towers were lofty and the walls thick and strong. The people of Pecos were many and brave. But might the time come when they would be conquered and their great pueblo sink again into the mud of which it was made?

CHAPTER XV

WAPOH FLEES FROM SIA

That summer, while the army of Coronado was crossing the plains, there was trouble at Sia.

The floods from the melting snow on the mountains had washed away the walls of the irrigation ditches. They had to be rebuilt, and the fields which had been covered deep with water had to be planted again.

The prairie gophers had suddenly appeared in large numbers and had eaten the young shoots of the beans. The Sia people had no seed beans left in their storerooms and they had had to go to Jemez and borrow from the pueblo people there.

When the corn was ripe, the crows had come in numbers that darkened the sky and devoured the crop. The men and boys of the pueblo had had to stay in the fields all night beating drums to frighten them away.

A worm, never seen in Sia before, ate the stems of the squashes, and they withered and failed to mature. In the dry season, when the river was low and the crops needed the gift of rain, clouds formed over the mountains day after day but they always mysteriously vanished and left the unveiled sun to burn the thirsting corn.

Wapoh Flees from Sia

The rain dance in August brought no answer from the people of the clouds. The young men ran the ceremonial races round the fields. They blew the sacred meal to the four points of the compass to protect the growing crops from harm, but they could not keep off the enemy nor bring the rain.

Some Sia women were sick with a fever that made them burn with heat for a time and then shiver with cold.

The pueblo people pondered all these things but no one spoke. Then one, bolder than the rest, said the dread word, 'Witches.' Such misfortunes did not come to a people of themselves. Black magic was working destruction to the pueblo.

Sia had suffered from witches for generations. There was a rain-priest witch who had changed himself into a butterfly when they tried to catch him. There were the witch rabbits and the witch deer who had led the Sia hunters into the mountains and left them there to be killed by the mountain lion. There had always been the witches who send things into people's bodies, snakes and worms and sticks, to make them ill. Every one in Sia wore charms, bear's claws or arrow heads, to protect them against the evil-doers. They always spoke gently to one another, for no one

knew which of his fellows was a witch. An angry witch makes trouble for the one who has injured him. It is wisest not to give offence.

Kotka alone among the boys was not afraid. Tyami, whose every word he believed, had told him that Acoma had few witches because the boys fought them and never ran away. Kotka whispered to the boys what they could do to be safe. For four nights in succession they must go to the river to bathe. On their return they must walk back quietly to the pueblo. They must not run nor look behind. If they turned their heads they would see evil and die. But if they were brave and looked straight ahead, they would be safe ever after from the enchantments of witches.

One of the boys decided to try. He stole out in the darkest part of the night and dipped himself in the muddy water. But when he tried to walk slowly back to the pueblo which lay still and ghostly under the stars, he thought he heard strange noises and saw terrible forms creeping along the river bank. He ran in terror to the pueblo and would not try again.

Kotka, alone, went the four times. He held his head as rigid as if it were set in stone and walked slowly, though his legs twitched to run. After the fourth night he boasted that the witches could do him no harm.

Wapoh Flees from Sia

Wapoh heard the children's talk and saw them looking strangely at her grandmother. She was frightened and kept away from them. She was very busy in her room at the top of the pueblo now, for her grandmother had the sickness that the other women had and was weak and ill. When the fever burned Wapoh gave her water, and covered her warmly when she shivered. She brought food but her grandmother would not eat. She lay drowsing on the floor of the room or on the sunny roof outside.

One night a man came into the kiva, his eyes wide with fright. He had been returning from the fields and had seen a bear near the house where his wife was sick. When he came close, it vanished.

The men of the kiva looked at each other.

'It is witchery,' they said.

The chief sat long in thought after they spoke. In front of the altar where they had been making offerings for the recovery of the sick, lay the beautiful ceremonial bowl which Wapoh's grandmother had made. He bent and took it in his hands. Then with a quick movement he dashed it to the ground. The fragments scattered in all directions, carrying the lovely cream-colored bits like flashes of light into the dark corners.

'For three days we will watch,' he said. 'Then we will drive the witch to the mountains.'

That night an owl hooted near the pueblo. Wapoh was wakened by the sound which pueblo children dread. Her grandmother was sleeping heavily and did not stir. Wapoh crept close to her side and slept again.

The next day Wapoh hardly left the room. Her grandmother slept restlessly and always woke to ask for water.

The second night the owl hooted again, nearer and louder than before. Wapoh reached out her hand and touched her grandmother's hot cheek. She tried not to be afraid.

The next day her grandmother did not know her and looked at her with unseeing eyes. Wapoh did not ask any one to help her with the sick woman, for she felt sure no one would come.

When the darkness came she lay by her grandmother's side, unable to sleep. She was listening for the owl's hoot. But the hours passed in silence and she dozed. Suddenly she heard the note of ill omen sounding directly above her head. The owl had a second time found the pottery rim a safe perch for his feet. Wapoh shivered and hid her face in her blanket.

She did not sleep again. She waited for the morning to come. When the light began to show in the east, she turned to look at her grandmother.

She found that the old woman was looking at her and smiling.

'Wapoh,' she whispered tenderly, and closed her eyes again.

Wapoh was overjoyed. She forgot the owl and his ominous hoot. Her grandmother was getting well! She rolled herself in her blanket and went quietly to sleep.

Just before the sun rose the pueblo chief and his medicine men stole out of the kiva and started up the ladder to the floor where Wapoh lived. Three times the warning had been sounded over the roof of a witch. She must live after this with other witches on the mesa top.

But they had no need to climb the ladder. The grandmother, with a smiling face and a glad heart, had gone to her daughter in the land of Shipapu where there is neither suffering nor sorrow.

Wapoh was happy that her grandmother was sick no more, but she was very lonely. The other children turned away from her, and she did not have enough to eat. She had to carry heavy jars of water for the women of the pueblo to receive so much as a thin wafer of bread. She thought often of her friend Tyami, the boy who had brought food to her when she was hungry and had smiled when no one else did. She would steal

away from Sia and find him again in Tiguex, where the pueblo people heard he was the servant of the Spanish general.

For days she saved the wafer bread which the women gave her and hid it in a jar by the river. Then one evening she stayed in the field after the others had gone, hidden among the dry cornstalks.

She could hear the men, who had been gathering the bright-colored ears of corn, singing the harvest songs as they walked back to the pueblo. The dusk was full of the music, like soft currents of air blown over the warm earth. She waited until it was dark and still before she felt safe to move. The September moon was past the full and there was no light except the stars.

The field where she crouched in hiding was some distance above the pueblo and she could cross the river without being observed. She found the jar and took from it the bread to eat on her way. She had to leave the bowl behind. She would have liked to take it with her, for it was one her grandmother had made for her, but it was too heavy to carry so far.

She waded across the river, and climbed the bank on the other side. Like all pueblo children she knew the stars. To go to Tiguex she must walk away from the only star in the sky that is

always the same. She gave a quick glance at it shining in the north above the mesa. Then she turned her back and started south toward the pueblos on the Rio Grande.

CHAPTER XVI

TYAMI FINDS A LOST CHILD

When Tyami reached Tiguex he found Arellano and his men again occupying the pueblo. The great house was once more full of the tumult of the white men. The horses in the corrals and on the hills were neighing to each other. The bells rang for the men to gather and listen to the words of the priest or to worship at the altar he had made in one of the kivas. The calls of the crier came from the top of the pueblo, announcing the day's duties to the soldiers, and in the evening the Spaniards sang the songs of romance to the accompaniment of lutes made of split gourds and buffalo sinews. The bleating of sheep and the baaing of lambs made a chorus strange to the pueblo Indians who wandered in and out of the familiar houses, feeling no longer at home. They heard many tongues, Spanish, Latin, the language of the Pima and Yaqui Indians from New Spain, and the talk of the different pueblo people who could not understand each other.

After the Spaniards had departed for the great plains, the Tiguex people had gone back to their home. They had never expected to see the white

men again and rejoiced in living once more under their own flat roofs.

They had taken care of the sheep which Coronado had left and of the horses which had been turned out on the hills as unfit to go with the army. They had sheared the sheep and twisted the fine hair into threads as they had done with the cotton. They had woven it into cloth, which was warmer and softer than any they had ever seen. They watched over the animals that could give such treasures to the pueblo. While the sheep ate the sweet-smelling sage on the hills, they walked beside them to see that the coyote did not come near the timid long-legged lambs that frolicked and played by their mothers' side.

But when the news came, carried by speedy runners from Pecos, that the white men were returning, the people of Tiguex again sought refuge in the villages to the north. They left a few sheep in the corrals and when the Spaniards arrived told them that the others had died. The rest they took with them, hiding them in the pueblos or pasturing them on distant hills where no one would see them. The horses that had grown strong during the summer they drove to the mountains, thinking to recapture them when the white man had ceased to ask where they were.

Arellano was a just and temperate man. Under

him the cruelties of the previous year were not repeated. The white man had learned how to live at peace with the pueblo people who cultivated the land and wanted only to be left alone.

The Spaniards asked for food to fill the storerooms for the winter and the Indians gave to them generously. Their crops had been abundant. So heavily did their fields bear when the rain was plentiful that they often did not harvest all they had. This year they brought in every ear of corn and pod of beans, and had plenty for all. Only the wild creatures that gleaned after the harvesting suffered from want.

One day Tyami was sent to the chief of the nearest pueblo with a present of powdered buffalo meat. He was to ask for some thimbleberries in exchange. Arellano had been ill and hungered for fruit. He had learned from Tyami that the men of the neighboring pueblo had just come back from the mountains with great baskets of the red berries.

As Tyami walked north between the field which covered the valley, he was chewing a mouthful of the powdered meat. He remembered when he had first seen the Apaches preparing it. Their women had made camp near the buffalo they had killed. Then the men, with thin bits of

flint set in wood, sliced the meat as thin as paper and hung the strips across leather thongs to dry in the hot sun. The Spaniards with their knives had tried to do the same, but they were slow and clumsy and the slices were too thick. They could not keep their knives from getting dull, though they rubbed them on stone to sharpen them. The Apaches gave their flints an edge with their own teeth.

Tyami had watched one fierce old Apache woman with matted black hair and sullen eyes crumble the meat to a powder after it was dry, and pack it in a buffalo-hide bag. She scowled at the gentle pueblo boy with the white teeth and smiling face, but when she had finished she mixed some meat in hot water and gave it to him to drink. The powder swelled till the drink was like a thick soup. Tyami thought it tasted better than anything he had ever eaten except the corn and antelope stew the women of Acoma made for the harvest dance.

As he thought of his home, Tyami felt very lonely. He longed to run away from the white men and go back to the steep-edged mesa in its quiet valley. He looked at the desert to the west and thought how easy it would be to escape unseen. But what would they say at Acoma if the boy who had been sent to warn the pueblo

of danger ran away from his duty? Tyami sighed and went on his way.

In order to avoid walking upon the planted fields, which were not yet fully harvested, he had left the river and was walking through the uncultivated land. It was covered with the desert growth which has a perfume like nothing else on earth. Tyami took deep breaths, not knowing why the smell brought him such comfort. He had forgotten that when he herded the turkeys at home, or raced in the valley with his mates, he was breathing the same fragrance. The desert-dweller cannot long be happy away from those delicate shifting currents of air that speak to him of home.

A rabbit darted from beneath a bush near by. It leaped in long bounds toward the rising ground where it would find sheltering shrubs. The black on the tip of its long ears and the black of its tail were like painted spots of piñon pitch on its light coat. Tyami remembered his wonder that the rabbits had shown no fear of the Spanish horsemen. The soldiers, sitting at ease on their horses, could kill them with their pikes. But if they dismounted, the rabbits dashed away in terror.

Tyami saw ahead of him a figure which looked familiar. At first he thought it was some woman of the pueblo coming to help with the harvest.

But it was too small and carried no burden. It probably was some child who had strayed from the village and must be guided back. He hastened his steps.

Suddenly the figure began to run toward him, crying joyously, 'Tyami! Tyami!'

Then he knew it was Wapoh. But what was she doing so far from Sia?

In a moment she was at his side, her face sober with uncertainty. Would Tyami send her back to those who had been unkind to her? She told her story hurriedly, looking at him imploringly as she begged him to take her with him to Acoma.

Tyami listened, as anxious as she. He knew that Acoma would welcome her as one of its own children. Her mother had belonged to the Antelope clan. His own mother belonged to that clan and would make Wapoh a sister to his baby brother. But on the banks of the Rio Grande they were far from Acoma. She might have to go back to Sia till he could come for her.

But Wapoh's look of horror when he suggested that she return to the pueblo from which she had fled decided him. He would ask the women of Tiguex to shelter the lonely child.

They walked together to the pueblo where the Tiguex people had taken refuge a second time. He presented his gift from Arellano to the chief,

and told him of the white captain's longing for a taste of the thimbleberries. A man was sent to bring him a basket of the fruit from the storeroom. While the messenger was gone, Tyami told the chief about Wapoh, his clan sister, and asked if the Tiguex women would take care of the child for him.

The chief listened gravely, looking at Wapoh's little thin body and sad face as Tyami talked. Witches never took the form of such a gentle, helpless child.

He nodded when the boy finished.

'The women of the Antelope clan of Tiguex will care for the girl,' he said. 'She shall have food and shelter till the boy of Acoma comes for her.'

The look of fear in the child's face changed to a happy smile.

'I can carry wood and water,' she said, holding out her hands as if to show how strong they were. 'I can cook the wafer bread and mix clay for moulding the pottery. I carry the ancient polishing-stone of the Antelope clan to smooth the ceremonial bowls.'

She drew from beneath her skirt the rounded stone with which her grandmother had polished the last bowl she had ever made.

The chief touched it with reverent hand. He

knew how old and how cherished such stones were.

'Take the gift to Acoma,' he said, 'and lay it before the altar in the Antelope kiva. Then you will be welcome.'

When Tyami started back with the basket of berries, he saw a smiling Wapoh carrying a jar of water, not too heavy for her young head, from the river to the house of the woman who had given her shelter.

CHAPTER XVII

TILTING AT TIGUEX

When Coronado and his thirty horsemen pressed on to Quivira, where they hoped for gold to reward them for all their suffering and privations, they had nothing with them to eat except the meat of the buffalo they killed. They were by now as weary of the endless steaks and roasts of the bison as they had been overjoyed when they first tasted the fresh meat. In addition they were forced to eat the flesh half-cooked, for in the treeless land they had nothing but dung for fuel and not enough of that.

Whenever they came to a stream they searched the banks for sorrel and ate any berries they could find, even though they sometimes made them sick. They even devoured the roots of water-weeds as a meat-fed dog will chew grass. But they soon left the streams behind them and had difficulty in finding water. The mud of buffalo wallows would have been welcome but there were none. They found many salt lakes, on top of which floated great cakes of solid salt. The men learned to ride cautiously, for the prairie dog had dug his holes everywhere and the horses some-

times stepped through the loose earth and injured themselves.

When the days were hot and the thirst became hard to bear, tempting mirages formed on the horizon, phantom lakes with herons standing in cool water and reeds growing on the shores. The men had to fight themselves, not to gallop headlong toward the vision and be lost.

But the dauntless Coronado pushed on. Nothing dismayed him. Even his disappointment when he finally reached Quivira and found it only a few villages of straw huts, inhabited by barbarous Indians, did not make him give up hope of finding wealth still further ahead. He would have liked to go on at once, but since winter was near, he decided to return to Tiguex and come back in the spring.

The only gold of Quivira was the yellow of the corn. Coronado's hungry followers were more grateful for that wealth than they would have been for shining metal. The Indians fed them with wild plums and grapes and nuts, and gave them corn for the long journey. They offered some of their warriors as guides to show them a short way back to the country of the pueblos.

Hunting Indians from the plains came to the villages bringing strange tales of other white men still further to the east. When the corn was first

putting forth its silk, they told the Spaniards, pale men like themselves had crossed the mighty river, father of waters, into the land of the buffalo. Coronado heard but he could not believe. In that part of the world there were no white men except his own followers. He was to travel far, through weary months, before he would know how close he had been in his wanderings to Hernando de Soto and to the waters of the Mississippi which had become the grave of that bold explorer.

The frosts came early to Quivira and Coronado dared not linger lest the snow cut off his return to Tiguex. He did not know how long and beautiful the Indian summer of the grass country was.

Before he left, Coronado had his men put up a great wooden cross by the river. He cut a few words in it with a chisel, saying that Francisco Vasquez de Coronado had passed that way.

In late September they started back. The horses were so loaded with corn that many of the men had to walk. Quivira guides led the way. Each morning they watched the sun rise and found from its position the route they must take for that day's march. Then the chief guide shot an arrow across the empty plain in the chosen direction. Before reaching the place where it had fallen, he shot another, and so on through the

hours till dark. There were no paths anywhere except those made by the humpback oxen.

When the aspens were golden on the mountainsides Coronado and his men rode along the trail from Pecos, past the great mountain that guarded the pueblos of the Rio Grande, and stopped in the court of Tiguex.

Tyami went out with the others to welcome the weary travelers. He was glad to see the man who had been his kind master since the day on which he had been carried to Tiguex, wet and half-frozen, to serve the Spanish general. He helped him from his horse, removed his armor, and brought him water to wash off the desert dust which covered his face like a mask.

Coronado was surprised to see how the boy had grown. On the long march across the plains he had added inches to his height until he was as tall as a man. He was strong, too, able to do a man's work in the fields.

After Coronado's return, the relation between the Spaniards and the pueblo people became even better than under Arellano. Some of the Tiguex people were willing to believe Coronado's promise of friendship and to return to their own pueblo and live beside the white men. Those who had taken care of Wapoh were among the first to come. In the mornings Tyami could see the child

carrying a water jar to the river to fill it for her foster mother's use. Sometimes he caught glimpses of her bending over the grinding-stones to make meal for the bread.

One sunny day she was at work near the pueblo, feeding a fire. It flamed under a broad stone as flat and smooth as still water. By Wapoh's side was a bowl filled with a mixture of bluish meal and water.

'Do you grind the meal and cook the bread?' Tyami asked, as he stopped to see what she was doing.

She smiled shyly.

'Watch,' she said, and dipped her hand in the bowl.

With a quick motion she spread a handful of the thin paste over the hot stone, dipping again until the whole surface was covered. Almost as soon as she had taken her hand away, the wafer was cooked. She peeled off the layer and folded it as though it had been a sheet of paper. Then she handed it to Tyami.

'Taste the Tiguex bread,' she said, happily.

Tyami munched the crisp wafer as he watched her feed the fire with cedar slivers and spread the blue mixture again. Over and over she repeated the process until the pile of wafers had grown high and the bowl was empty.

Tilting at Tiguex

Coronado had come out of the pueblo to enjoy the warm sun. He lingered by the two a moment, admiring the girl's skill. His eye was keen as a hawk's. His sunburned face was almost hidden by beard and moustache, but its expression was kindly. He wore a doublet, roughly fashioned of the native cloth, and his trousers were of deerskin, once white but now darkened and soiled by wear. His sword was fastened at his side, and his hand rested on the hilt as if that were its natural place.

'In Tiguex the children can take the women's place,' he said amiably, patting the girl's straight black hair which was lustrous in the sunlight.

Wapoh shrank from his touch. She feared the white men. She wondered to see Tyami move among them as freely as though he were with his own people.

Just then a Spanish captain came riding up from the river where he had been watering his horse. He greeted Coronado.

'Tilt with me in the court,' he said. 'The horses fatten and grow lazy.'

Coronado assented with a flash of fire in his eye. Don Pedro Maldonado would not be difficult to unseat. He turned to Tyami.

'Saddle my horse,' he commanded, 'and bring the sharpest spurs. Use the silver-mounted saddle and put the heavy curb bit in the bridle.'

Tyami hesitated.

'The saddle-girth is weak,' he said. 'To-day Diego sews another of the buffalo hide.'

Coronado waved him impatiently aside.

'The girth will hold,' he said. 'Saddle at once.'

Tyami ran to the corral to catch his master's big chestnut horse.

Wapoh carried the fresh bread into the house. She set the empty bowl in the grinding-room and piled under shelter the wood that was left. Then she hurried to tell the kind woman with whom she lived that the white men were to ride in a strange game of war in front of the pueblo. The two wrapped themselves in blankets, for the air was cold, and sat on the roof to watch the mysterious doings of the strangers.

The chestnut was very spirited and did not wish to be caught. But Tyami by now knew the ways of horses. He went into the corral, corn in one hand and in the other, hidden behind his back, the bridle. The beautiful animal came up quickly for the corn. Tyami seized him by the nose, and before the startled horse could jump away or catch a breath had slipped the bit in his mouth. The rest was easy. In a short time Tyami had the powerful animal at Coronado's side. Strapped to the horse's back was the tall Spanish saddle, its leather torn and scratched

and its silver trimmings scarred and tarnished with hundreds of miles of travel over rocky mountains and through the country of the tall cactus.

Coronado threw himself across the saddle with a quick leap, and took his long pike in his hand. Its blunted tip assured nothing worse to the defeated than a fall from his horse.

Maldonado rode off some distance and turned to face his opponent. He held his pike in his hand and his rusty breastplate caught a dull luster from the light of the sun. Coronado's armor had been polished by Tyami's skillful hands until it shone with a golden glow. Neither man wore a helmet and their long wavy hair blew in the wind.

The pueblo roof was covered with Indians and with idling Spaniards who found the time pass slowly and welcomed any break in the tedium of the days. They put up wagers as to which of the two would win. One man staked the turquoise chain he had stolen from Cibola on Coronado's victory; another the rabbit he had killed that morning on Maldonado's triumph.

At a signal from Alvarado, who acted as starter for the joust, the two rode at a fast gallop toward each other. Each man was hit a glancing blow by a pike, but neither was unseated. Amid

shouts from the onlookers they rode back to their places and stood, pike in hand, waiting for the signal.

The chestnut plunged at the start as though he had felt a sudden prick of the spur, and came dashing down the line, heedless of the cruel curb in his mouth. As he neared the other horse, he swerved a little. The saddle-girth suddenly broke and Coronado was thrown heavily to the ground. He fell directly in the path of Maldonado's horse which was galloping at full speed. Maldonado tried to turn him but it was too late. The excited animal leaped over Coronado, striking the side of his unhelmeted head with his hoof.

Coronado lay motionless as the men rushed to his side. They were horrified at the sight of the unconscious man. Their general, who had led them through so many dangers, had been killed at last in idle play!

But Coronado, although he was seriously wounded, was not killed. He was carried into the pueblo. By his side was a priest to perform the last rites for the dying if necessary. A soldier with some pretensions to a knowledge of medicine was given charge of the injured man, and Tyami watched over him. He stayed with his master day and night. He covered him warmly through the chilly nights and kept the room quiet

during the day. He put cold water on the burning wound and bore patiently with the sick man's moods.

When the white men left for the night, Tyami made a trail of sacred meal to the door, along which prayers to the spirit of healing could go. He ran an eagle plume softly across the head of the wounded man and down to his feet to charm away the sickness which troubled him. Under the mattress on which Coronado lay, he placed a prayer-stick and the eagle plumes.

Only after he had summoned the spirits that befriend the sick to come to the help of the white general did the tired pueblo boy sleep.

CHAPTER XVIII

DEPARTURE OF CORONADO

THROUGH weary weeks Coronado lay on his bed, helpless and suffering. After a time, whether with the help of Spanish medicine or of Indian magic, he grew better and able to walk in the sunshine again. Little by little he and his men had ceased to talk of returning to Quivira and of the wealth they would find if they explored further. Coronado feared he would not live long and he wanted to die in his home. He thought of his lovely young wife from whom he had been separated so many months, and yearned to see her again.

The men, too, disappointed in their hope of finding gold, had tired of the desert country and longed for their friends and sweethearts in the capital of New Spain.

In April Coronado was well enough to command again. He gave orders that the army should prepare for the return to the country from which they had set out with high hopes two years before. There was grumbling and protest among his followers. Some few wished to return to Quivira and explore beyond. Others thought they should stay in Tiguex until the viceroy in New

Departure of Coronado

Spain decided what was to be done with the new land conquered for the Spanish crown. But most of the men were easily persuaded to give up their barren gains and return to the land where fresh adventure might be waiting for them.

The Indians who had guided Coronado from Quivira were allowed to go back to their own people. All the Indians who had been made servants of the white men were released to return to their own pueblos.

Tyami had become fond of the white general whom he had once feared and distrusted, but he was glad to see the white men go. His heart rejoiced that Acoma would be safe at last from the menace of the enemy, and he would be free to return to his home.

The day before the army was to start was a holy day in the religion of the Spaniards. The white men were gathered in front of the pueblo to hear Friar Juan de Padilla speak. The priest told them that he felt a mission from God to convert the barbarous Indians of Quivira to the one true faith. He had been led to leave the lovely land of Spain and to cross the stormy waters in order to bring light to these darkened minds. He could not turn back till his duty was done. He was returning that very day to Quivira with the guides. Coronado had given his per-

mission, though the priest did not need the consent of any man, since his commission came from the King of Heaven, not of earth.

The soldiers admired the brave man of God. They watched him start off, with the guides and a few companions, toward the vast buffalo country and the great rivers of the north. He took with him some ornaments, a few sheep, mules, and a horse. For a long time they could see his tall form in the brown robe walking beside the loaded animals. He turned now and again to wave a friendly farewell. Then he finally disappeared behind a fold of the hills. They sighed, for they knew it was unlikely that they would ever see him again in this world. They could hardly hope to see him in the next world, either, unless their many sins could be forgiven before they died.

When the morning came for the army to depart, the country was fresh and beautiful after a rain. Showers like long pale streamers of mist, the 'walking rain' of the Indian, moved across the sky, fading and reappearing in sunlight and in shadow. The blossoming earth was sweet with the spring verdure.

The horses were loaded for the journey with the dried meat of the buffalo. The sheep were taken with the army to provide food on the march

across the desert where no game was to be had. They cropped hastily at the tender herbage under their feet as they moved along. They liked to linger in the hollows, where lodged water made the sage delicious, and had to be driven on.

Tyami and Wapoh, with the other pueblo people, watched the departure. In the hearts of all was a great gladness. The strangers had come out of the south and brought sorrow in their train. They were going back into that far, mysterious country, leaving the pueblos again in peace.

Few of those who stood on the flat roofs that April day would ever see a white man again. For forty years the land of the terraced houses would know them no more; neither the armored soldiers who wished to make their lands subject to the King of Spain nor the robed priests who wished to make their souls subject to the King of Kings.

As they stood on top of the pueblo watching the last of the army in the far distance, a beautiful double rainbow formed before their eyes, perfect from horizon to horizon. All faces were lifted to it in awe. Not a sound escaped from the lips of the spell-bound observers. Men, women, and children stood silent before the message from above. The cloud people were speaking in those

soft bands of color. They had not forgotten the children of the desert land whose rivers they filled with life-giving water.

The chief medicine man breathed gently from a prayer-plume in his hand. Then he lifted his face and prayed.

'O ancient ones, ascend from the middle of the earth below, through the door of the entrance to the lower world and hear us! O rainbow people, may our thoughts pass over the curve of many-colored light and bring to you the song of our grateful hearts.'

The rainbow glowed brighter for a moment and then slowly disappeared, fading into clear air as the last of the stragglers marched behind the low hills to the west.

CHAPTER XIX

SAFE AT ACOMA

THREE days after the Spaniards had departed, Tyami and Wapoh crossed the river and started on the long trail to Acoma. The little girl carried a bag of bread and the new white buckskin boots her foster mother had given her. She walked on her small bare feet, for she wished to save the beautiful boots for the winter when the snow and ice would be cold on her unprotected skin. She had nothing else that was hers except the ragged clothes upon her back.

Tyami told her that his mother had woven cloth she would give to her and a warm rabbit-skin blanket for her bed. In Tyami's house there were only boys, and his mother would cry for joy to have a daughter to sleep by the hearth and bring wood and water for the cooking. Wapoh smiled. Every day was taking her further from Sia and from sad memories of unkindness.

Tyami told her about the little brother who would play with her, and of the great number of turkeys which lived at the foot of the mesa. He described the rock on which Acoma stood with its three rows of terraced houses and its

steep trail where no enemy could climb unseen. Wapoh laughed with joy as he told her these things, and ran to get there faster.

But the way was too long for running and Wapoh too young to go very fast. Once or twice when Tyami was hurrying, in the hope of catching a glimpse of Mother-of-the-Rain Mountain which guarded the valley of his home, he was stopped by a little cry. He had left Wapoh far behind and she feared he had forgotten her and was leaving her in the desert alone. After that he tried to walk slowly, remembering the tired child, until his impatience grew too great and he started off again at a rapid pace.

The third day they were walking through a country which seemed to be growing spirals of sand on all sides. Little whirling winds sucked up the tawny earth and carried it along, only to drop it suddenly in a heap of sand. The children tried to race with the moving columns, but the sand blew uncomfortably in their faces.

Tyami, rubbing the sand from his eyes after a sudden gust, looked ahead of him and rubbed his eyes again, thinking the sand had blinded him. He thought he had seen a sheep with two little lambs at her side, standing in the shelter of a low shrub.

A cry from Wapoh assured him that she, too,

had seen something unusual. They walked slowly toward the bush, their hearts beating fast with excitement. They tried not to frighten the mother. As they drew near, she started off, watching them anxiously. The lambs ran by her side, paying no attention to the boy and girl.

'She must have run away from the soldiers before her lambs were born,' said Tyami, noticing how young and wobbly legged the lambs were. 'We'll take them home to Acoma.'

Both children were delighted. They drove the three animals gently in the right direction. They moved slowly, stopping when the mother grazed on the gray-green sage which was all about them and moving when she moved. Little by little the soft-eyed ewe lost her fear of them. Before long she ate some corn meal which Tyami offered her, and licked his hand for more. After that she did not need to be driven. She followed where the children led and slept beside them at night, her lambs cuddled in Wapoh's arms.

Nothing seemed to move in the fragrant sunny world except themselves. Even the rabbits were in hiding and the lizards crept behind warm rocks.

Part of the time Wapoh walked with her hand on the neck of the ewe. Sometimes she ran beside the lambs, which were getting stronger and more frolicsome every day. She loved to feel their

curly wool, so closely matted on their little bodies. Tyami told her that his mother would weave wonderful cloth of the white hairs. Acoma would not have to go every year to the pueblos of the Rio Grande to get the cotton for its cloth. When the valley at the foot of the great mesa was white with Tyami's sheep, every one in the pueblo would be warm even when the winter wind blew cold from the mountains.

Slowly the children neared Tyami's home. First they saw the Enchanted Mesa where, long before the memory of the oldest man in the pueblo, the Acoma people lived. But the rock that carried the trail to its top had fallen and no one could ever climb its sheer sides again.

Tyami pointed to the long mesa beyond it just coming into sight.

'Acoma!' he said, and his lip trembled.

The long flat rock in the middle of the valley had terraced houses near the rim. Steep cliffs encircled it like giant walls built for its protection.

As they came nearer they could see tiny figures of men and women at the edge, looking down upon them. It was a strange procession to see coming out of the desert, the tall boy, the little girl, and the three unknown white creatures walking with them.

The chief of the pueblo and a group of men

'ACOMA!' HE SAID, AND HIS LIP TREMBLED

came out from the mesa to meet them. Tyami's father was one of them. He welcomed his son with the quiet dignity of the pueblo men but he could not wholly conceal his joy.

When they saw Tyami they all marveled. Many months had passed since they had sent him to Sia. Strange rumors and tales of cruelty had come from the river pueblos and few of the people of Acoma had ever hoped to see Tyami again. They saw that he had grown tall and strong, fit, some day, to be chief of the pueblo which he had helped to save.

They welcomed Wapoh with smiles and kind words. There were never enough babies in pueblo cradles, and every child was precious. Tyami's mother would be rich with two sons and a daughter.

But most wonderful of all to the Indians were the lambs and their mother. Every one wanted to touch and to pet them. They listened with shining eyes while Tyami described the cloth the white men made from the wool of the sheep. Two of the men carried the lambs the last part of the way, for they thought the young legs were tired from the long trail. The mother sheep followed, anxiously baaing as she walked, while the men laughed at the new song they had never heard before.

Hashte, the cross old turkey-tender, fixed one of the turkey corrals for the ewe and the lambs. The pen ran under an overhanging rock where they could sleep on dry sand, safe from storm, and out of sight of the eagles who floated lazily above the mesa watching for their prey.

Wapoh, who felt timid among so many strangers, walked close beside Tyami as they came to the foot of the trail to the top of the mesa. At first the ascent was fairly easy. A great split in the rocks opened a passage. As they went higher, the path became steeper and more difficult. The last twenty feet was up the face of a smooth rock in which tiny holes for fingers and toes had been cut with rude implements by early dwellers and worn smooth by generations of climbers. Wapoh, who had lived always in the sandy valley of the Jemez, was terrified as she groped for the holes. She looked down, thinking how far she would fall if she lost her hold. But Tyami came close behind her and told her he would catch her if she slipped.

When they came out on the flat rocky mesa, the women of the pueblo were waiting to greet them. One woman, whom the others pushed forward with friendly smiles, held a little two-year-old boy by the hand. Tyami ran forward and caught up the child, laughing and talking as he

tossed him in the air. The little boy was frightened by the stranger, but he did not cry. He looked at his mother and she smiled at him and at Tyami. Tyami smiled back. His eyes were full of the joy of homecoming, but he was a man now, not a child to be embraced, even by his mother.

Suddenly he seemed to remember something. He put the little boy down and turned to Wapoh. She had hung back when she saw him catch the child in his arms. Tyami took the little boy's hand and put it in hers.

'A new sister for the baby,' he said, speaking to his mother. He told her quickly the story of Wapoh and the Sia fear of witchcraft which had driven her from her home. While he was talking, she looked kindly at the dark-eyed girl. She took the child's free hand in both of hers.

'Little Wapoh of the Antelope clan,' she said, 'my house hearkens for the step of a girl. It hears only the feet of boys. My grinding-stone waits for the hand of a daughter. My old hands are weary of much grinding of meal.'

Wapoh looked at her with a radiant smile.

'Wapoh will grind for the mother of Tyami,' she said eagerly. 'And the baby brother will sing the grinding-song,' she added, pressing the child to her side. He had no fear of her. He threw his

arms about her in delighted play and tried to draw her with him toward the pueblo.

Tyami and his mother faced each other.

'She is his sister,' said the mother. 'He leads her home.'

When they reached the long rows of terraced houses, the little boy still clung to Wapoh's hand. He climbed the ladder, turning anxiously back to be sure that she was following him. When they reached the top, he took her hand again and led her along the flat roof to the door of the room where he and his mother lived. Tyami and his father slept in the kiva with the men, but the women of Acoma lived with the young children in the upper stories of the houses, as they did in the other pueblos.

The little boy stepped over the high threshold into the room, still clinging to Wapoh's hand. She followed, stooping a little not to strike her head on the low lintel.

The other two stayed outside, watching to see what the child would do. He walked to the corner of the room where the wafer bread was kept and taking a sheet offered it to Wapoh. Tears filled the little girl's eyes. She was accepted as a daughter. She crumbled bits of the bread and tossed them to the four points of the compass, above her head and at her feet, saying

softly as she did so, 'Yellow woman of the north, blue woman of the west, red woman of the south, white woman of the east, slightly yellow woman of the zenith, and dark woman of the nadir, my heart is one with your hearts.'

Tyami and his mother smiled at each other. The omen was good. The little brother had found a sister, the mother had found a daughter, and Wapoh was safe at last in her home on the great mesa of Acoma.

THE END

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Pecos
Canadian River
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